

**Minutes of The Full Council Meeting held at The Rackliff Centre on  
Monday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2022 at 7.30pm**

**Members Present:**

Cllr Liz Ellicott, Chair; Cllr A Britcher-Allan, Cllr C Ducklin, Cllr D Funnell, Cllr P Gripper, Cllr M O'Callaghan, Cllr D Smith and Cllr A Taylor.

**Officers Present:**

Alison Stevens, Locum Clerk

**Others and Members of the Public:**

County Councillor James McInroy, Mr Nigel Cheek (Rusthall Cricket Club) and two members of the public were also present.

**1. Enquire whether anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting**

No one present filmed, photographed or recorded the meeting.

**2. To receive and approve apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Barry Edwards. The reasons for his apologies were accepted by the Full Council.

**3. Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**

There were no declarations of interests.

**4. Declarations of Lobbying**

None.

**5. Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on the 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022**

The Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on the 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022 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). Councillor Ellicott said she has been told that the staff at The Amelia Scott will be moving to the library. County Councillor McInroy offered to clarify the issue.

**5.2** Matters outstanding from previous minutes. None.

**6. Nigel Cheek, Rusthall Cricket Club**

Mr Cheek presented an overview of the implementation of the Ground Security Project which involved;

- Placing tree trunks around the perimeter of the field.
- Excavating a ditch from the back corner of the pavilion to the back corner of the car park.
- Creating a log chicane inside the entrance.

He said;

- the dry and sunny weather in January enabled the majority of the work to be done in two to three days with minimal impact to the cricket ground and roadside verge.
- There is still a little work outstanding - the placing of some trunks across the Tarry Path – which will be carried out in the Spring when the access is firm enough for the machinery required.

- To support the enhanced security measures, the Friends of the Commons has paid for an additional barrier in the same design used successfully on the lower cricket pitch on Tunbridge Wells Common.

Mr Cheek thanked the Parish Council for funding the measures and said the Cricket Club can now look forward to the season ahead with less worry.

It was also noted that;

- The new measures still allow access for dog walkers.
- There is some graffiti on the pavilion. Some equipment in the shed and a lawnmower have also been stolen.
- The Club hopes to be able to secure the services of a roofer in April or May to repair the roof after it was damaged by the storms.

## **7. Open session for questions from the public**

Mrs Blackburn;

- Asked if the Club has any lighting. There is no electricity because it is too expensive to connect up to the National Grid.
- Reported that the Kent High Wealden Partnership has cleaned Fremlin Pond towards which the Parish Council makes a £600 donation.

## **8. Session for County and Borough Councillor on matters concerning the Parish**

County Councillor McInroy said;

- He was pleased to see the 20mph zone has been installed but noted residents' concerns about the quality of the work, because some of the paintwork is already wearing away, and there are no signs in Meadow Road or Ashley Gardens. He agreed to work with the Parish Council to agree a course of action with KCC.
- KCC is still waiting for quotes for the crossing near the church on the A264.
- It is with great sadness he has to announce the death of Alderman John Davies. Mr Davies was a well-respected past Chairman of Kent County Council, Kent County Council Planning Committee and the Rotary Club of Tunbridge Wells and he will be sorely missed.

A two minute silence followed.

Councillor Funnell said he has;

- Reported some broken pavements at Headway Court.
- Arranged a new food caddy for a resident.
- Helped others to get their broken black bins replaced.

Councillor Britcher-Allan;

- Said she has received a massive response to her request for donations to help the residents of Ukraine and she thanked all those who helped, which included Councillors Gripper and Ellicott. She also thanked all those who donated, which included the Community Larder. She said clothes are no longer needed but donations of hygiene products and food desperately are. Financial donations, ideally through the Disasters Emergency Fund or the British Red Cross are needed to.
- Said she has received no further updates about the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) or the roadside mirrors despite the Locum Clerk and her asking for one. County Councillor McInroy offered his help.
- Asked County Councillor McInroy for an update on an EVC Point planned for the parish-owned land opposite the Southwood allotments.

## 9. Finance update

**9.1:** Accounts for Payment – Councillors RESOLVED to approve the list of payments dated 4<sup>th</sup> March 2022 (see below).

04/03/2022	EE	DD	47.64	Mobile
07/03/2022	NEST	DD	23.87	Pensions
07/03/2022	Alison Stevens	BACS	2952.00	Locum Clerk
08/03/2022	C Woodhead	BACS	30.00	Refund Allotment
08/03/2022	RIALTAS	BACS	206.40	Annual Support
08/03/2022	C May	BACS	190.00	Locum RFO
08/03/2022	Melanie Goddard	BACS	58.75	Allotment Refund
08/03/2022	KCC	BACS	1,206.00	Load Testing (Xmas)
08/03/2022	Scottish Hydro	DD	202.37	Rackliff Centre Elec
25/03/2022	NEST	DD	23.87	Pensions
25/03/2022	HMRC	BACS	24.75	NI Contributions
25/03/2022	Kevin Watson	BACS	443.21	Salary
25/03/2022	Linda Neusten	SO	839.55	Salary
28/03/2022	Microshade	BACS	102.60	Monthly payment adj

## 10. Planning Committee

**10.1** RESOLVED to adopt the draft minutes of the Planning Committee Meetings which were held on the 7<sup>th</sup> February and the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

## 11. High Street, Rusthall

- i. High Street Crossing - At the last meeting Councillor Taylor said she has received reports of some near misses caused by cars overtaking at the crossing and she asked if would be possible to have a pelican crossing there.

The Locum Clerk subsequently contacted KCC and is now waiting for a reply. In the meantime she has made the PCSO aware so he can patrol the area more often. Once the Parish Council has received a reply this matter will be referred to the next Highways Meeting.

Councillor Ellicott also pointed out that the traffic should slow down there when the Speedwatch sessions resume.

- ii. Thai Takeaway - The Parish Council has received a request from a trader asking if it would have any objections if he sold take-away Thai food from a food van at the top of the High Street next to the Village Green or from Manor Road next to the One Stop, every Friday evening from 4pm to 8pm. Councillors RESOLVED unanimously to object to the proposal because;
  1. There is already a good Thai restaurant and takeaway in the village.
  2. There will be more litter in the area.
  3. The village is already adequately served with takeaways.
  4. The Red Lion, which has been in the village for 600 years sells takeaways and is already said to be struggling.
  5. There will be more parking problems.
  6. The future of the High Street needs to be taken into account and the High Street needs to be kept alive. This proposal will not help that because it will take away business from the existing outlets.
- iii. Britain in Bloom - The license for the hanging baskets has been applied for. The flowers in the baskets this year will be red, white and blue to help commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The hanging baskets will be fitted once the bunting has been taken down.

- 12. Queen's Platinum Jubilee** – At the last Parish Council Meeting, Councillors RESOLVED unanimously to;
- i. Light a beacon on the Rackliff forecourt on the first day of the celebrations and open up the hall for a low key social gathering after.
  - ii. Provide bunting to decorate ten lamp posts in the High Street at a cost of £60 per lamp post.

It is understood that residents in Meadow Road, Hill View and Southwood Road are also planning to hold street parties.

- 13. Defibrillator Update** – At the last meeting the Locum Clerk reported that along with the Deputy Clerk she carried out a risk assessment of the defibrillators in the parish and found the defibrillators at the URC and Sunnyside both had full batteries.

Councillors subsequently RESOLVED to ask the Parish Council's contractor to fit the defibrillator which is currently at The Rackliff Centre, at The Toad. The Parish Council is now waiting for a price from a contractor. The battery was subsequently found to have two bars and does not as it stands, need replacing until later in the year.

- 14. PCSO Update** – The Parish Council no longer has a dedicated PCSO but it has a PCSO it can contact if it needs to. The contact for Rusthall Parish Council is PCSO Ewan McKim.

The Locum Clerk has reported incidents of anti-social behaviour, the problem at the High Street crossing and an outbreak of graffiti to him to make him aware.

Councillors said they would like to see more of a police presence in the village and agreed they would like Kent Police to prioritise Neighbourhood Policing in its latest review.

**15. Internal Audit 2021-2022**

- i. Councillors RESOLVED to appoint David Buckett as the Parish Council's Internal Auditor for 2021-2022.
- ii. Councillors reviewed and RESOLVED to adopt the Standing Orders (2018) and latest Financial Regulations (2019).
- iii. Councillors reviewed and RESOLVED to adopt the Kent Code of Conduct (2019).
- iv. Councillor reviewed and adopted the Fixed Asset Register dated September 2021 and the Risk Assessments which cover the Rackliff Centre, Litter Picking, Fremlin Pond, The Beacon, the Allotments, Snow Clearance and Salomons Road. These assets will be reviewed regularly by the Deputy Clerk.

**16. Chair's Report** – Cllr Ellicott;

- i. Confirmed she has submitted her response to the Boundary Commission Consultation and encouraged others to do the same. Details of the consultation can be found on the Parish Council's website and on its Facebook Page.
- ii. Has been to look at the dead memorial tree and thanked Mr Barber for clearing the brambles. A new tree has been ordered and paid for and is expected to be delivered soon. The memorial plaque has been temporarily removed because it had started to become adrift. The position of the new tree may be brought forward slightly.

- 17. Officers' Report** – All the matters in the Officer's Report had been covered elsewhere in the meeting.

**18. Diary Dates**

14 <sup>th</sup> March 2022	7.30pm	Finance Committee Meeting.
21 <sup>st</sup> March 2022	7.30pm	Allotment Committee Meeting.
25 <sup>th</sup> April 2022	7.30pm	Environment Committee Meeting
4 <sup>th</sup> April 2022	7.30pm	Full Council Committee Meeting

It was also noted that there is to be a Village Fund Raising Event at the United Reform Church and St Paul’s Church for the Disasters Emergency Fund/Red Cross (Ukraine) on the 9<sup>th</sup> April from 11am. Residents are invited to turn up on the day. Full details of the event will be available from Councillor Britcher-Allan nearer the time.

**19. Items for Information**

Residents are being asked to let the Kent County Council know their views on the reductions it plans to make to its Supported Bus Services. 48 contracts have been selected for possible withdrawal.

The consultation formally opened on the 24<sup>th</sup> February and will close on 20th April. Full details can be found at [www.kent.gov.uk/bussavings](http://www.kent.gov.uk/bussavings)

**20. Next meeting of Full Council -**

4<sup>th</sup> April 2022                      7.30pm                      The Rackliff Centre

**IN VIEW OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM ON THIS AGENDA, COUNCILLORS RESOLVED TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC UNDER THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSIONS TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960.**

**21. To consider confidential staffing matters and agree any further action.**

Councillors RESOLVED to;

- i. Make a one off payment to Officer Neusten in recognition of her hard work whilst she covered the absence of a Parish Clerk.
- ii. Make up Officer Watson’s pay to half pay whilst he is on long term sick leave. This decision will be reviewed in December.

..... Chairman

Dated .....