

## BAPCHILD PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Meeting held 28<sup>th</sup> November 2023

A meeting of the Bapchild Parish Council was held in The Antony Room, Bapchild Village Hall, Tuesday 28th November 2023 at 7.30pm

**1. Present:** Cllr L Trott (Chairman) Cllr R Bush (Vice-Chairman), Cllr C Culver, Cllr M Larking, Cllr C Clifton, Mrs E Cruise (Clerk)

In Attendance: Cllr Monique Bonney, PC

**2. Apologies:** Cllr M Julians

**Public Participation:** There was no public participation.

Prior to commencing our business meeting, PC Kirsten Jones was introduced and welcomed by Cllr Trott. A discussion was held concerning any incidents to report and it was noted West Downs area villages had been reporting similar incidents involving speeding vehicles, nuisance quad bikes/e-scooters. Stones Farm Countryside Park was mentioned as there had been an incident reported of anti-social behaviour involving off-roading motorcycles using the area. PC Jones was aware of this and confirmed the local Police are working with all housing providers and residents regarding issues of antisocial behaviour. The Police are currently going through a period of restructuring and there will be more presence in rural areas and there has been an increase in incidents of items being stolen from remote farms.

The Clerk had emailed in advance to enquire whether the newsletters containing local incidents/crimes of note would be continuing and for clarification regarding the published statistics on the West Downs crime map. PC Jones confirmed she would look into this and report back via email. Cllr Trott thanked PC Jones for attending and she left the meeting to attend to her duties.

**3. Acceptance of Minutes from last meeting:** It was agreed unanimously to accept the minutes of the last meeting held 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023 as a true record of the meeting. The minutes were signed by the Chairman.

**4. Matters Arising from previous Minutes:**

4.1 Stones Farm, Attenuation pond/handover/security/future management of Countryside Park. A useful site meeting was held with SBC Martyn Cassell, Graeme Tuff, Kris Staples, Cllr Monique Bonney, Cllr Trott, Cllr Bush, Cllr Culver and Liz Cruise on 20/11/2023.

It was confirmed the Lloyd Bore Report will be used as a control document. Items discussed included security, maintenance, the provision of a suitable gate from the A2 (next to the Fox & Goose) to enable maintenance staff to access the area for grass cutting etc and for Southern Water contractors to access the Pumping Station, together with an appropriate style of gate providing access for pedestrians, wheelchairs/prams etc. Also discussed was safety signage and life-saving equipment (around the attenuation pond area), litter/dog waste bins, maintenance of the PROW ZR191. Kris Staples, Community Warden discussed the wildflower area, community orchard planting, a hedgerow to be planted behind the A2 boundary fence, plus making some wooden benches. It was also confirmed the drainage basin is of the correct size and the filtration will be monitored.

The Countryside Park is in the process of being transferred to Swale which is likely to occur in the Spring of next year. The plan is for the area to be actively managed and for recruitment of some volunteers and liaising with the school to possibly help with some hedge planting too.

### **Spring Acres further Items:**

(1) Update – Travel Plan, Tim Harris, Hyde Housing emailed the final draft of the travel plan and awaits a final internal sign off before being circulated to residents. The comments about the reduced X3 and X4 Bus Service has been noted.

(2) Vacant shop units – update. Disappointingly, the latest update from Julia Charter, The Hyde Group confirmed there has been interest from fast food outlets rather than our preferred choice of a medically related business. The space available was apparently too small for a surgery or a pharmacy. There has been a local business owner who is open to offer training to benefit a local resident(s) being discussed by Hyde currently.

Members discussed further the lack of GP services and Cllr Bonney suggested the Parish Council write to the Kent and Medway ICB about GP Services in Sittingbourne area and copy Cllr Angela Harrison, Kent Health & Wellbeing Board (Swale) and lobby KCC Rich Lehmann too to enquire whether an urgent GP-led treatment centre (with prescribing function) is being proposed for Sittingbourne, similar to those in Sheppey and Faversham. **Action: Clerk to write to K&MICB**

(3) Proposed Road names consultation – response to SBC due 18/12/2023 – Members confirmed they did not have any comments to add. **Action: Clerk to email response to Kellie Shew.**

4.2 Fox Hill landscaping/maintenance to cul-de-sac area. The reduction in the planting, which amounts to half what was proposed on the original drawing, has been referred back to SBC and KCC. SBC have already signed this area off, so the responsibility is with KCC. The Parish Council has received comments from Fox Hill residents about the weeds instead of the grassed verges and the lack of planting they had expected on the Fox Hill side of the fence. This has been reported and Cllr Bonney will chase up via Ceri Williams, Planning Development Manager and Cllr Rich Lehmann. Members also considered and approved unanimously adding the grass cutting of this area to the Blenwood contract for annual grass cutting maintenance to provide a uniformed cut in keeping with the other areas in the village.

4.3 Amenity areas – update shrub bed/trees Doubleday/Morris Court/PROW rear of school. Although some branches had been removed by the school late in the summer, the growth is still an ongoing issue. The Clerk awaits a response to our latest emails and our offer to pay half the cost for removal and disposal (£75.00). Cllr Bonney suggested writing to the Diocese if we do not hear from the school.

### **5. Highway Matters**

5.1 Bapchild HIP – update on proposal for single yellow line, School Lane. The proposal is with the KCC Design and Delivery Team. The next stage will be an informal consultation with those residents affected by the proposal. This proposal will involve a TRO and signage and an enquiry will need to be made concerning any available grants or funding sources. **Action: Clerk to chase up with Jennie Watson.**

### **6. Planning Matters**

6.1 21/501334/OUT Provectus 95 houses Fox Hill/School Lane – No further updates

6.2 21/503906/EIOUT and 21/503914/EIOUT Highsted Park. The latest update on SBC Planning Portal, National Highways further holding objection until 24/01/2024.

6.3 KCC/SW/0204/2023 Section 73 to vary conditions and extend brickearth extraction until 31/10/2026 Panteny Lane and south of the A2 Hempstead House – **Action: Clerk to email short no comments response.**

7. Bapchild Fruit & Vegetable Stall – The Clerk had received two separate complaints about the amount of rubbish beside and around the shipping container at the rear of the Fruit Stall, and the vehicle sales. The rubbish has since removed, the area behind the fruit stall tidied and the cars should be removed by Christmas.

8. Local Plan Review update. Cllr Bonney provided an update on the Local Plan confirming background work on the Local Plan Review continues by way of writing policies. Updates to the timetable will be available in due course.

9. Bank reconciliation – monthly reports for October, November balance to date, Clerk to report. The Clerk had emailed out the reports prior to the meeting. Members approved both reports unanimously and Cllr Trott signed them.

<u>9.1</u>	<u>Cheques/online payments already made:</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Amount</u>
9.1.1	05/10/2023	SBC election recovery expenses	129.60
9.1.2	13/10/2023	Streetlights Maintenance Contract 3(of4)	370.55
9.1.3	16/10/2023	EDF (1-30/9/2023)	85.20
9.1.4	25/10/2023	Clerk Salary October	417.88
9.2	02/11/2023	Streetlights Lighting remedial works	378.00
	<u>Cheques/online payments due:</u>		
9.2.1		EDF 1-31/10/2023	85.67
9.2.3	28/11/2023	Clerk Salary November	417.88
9.3	<u>Income/Received Due:-</u>		
9.3.1	03/10/2023	SBC Part 2 Precept and Lighting Grant	7432.50
9.3.3	01/11/2023	VAT Annual Claim	1,182.79

10.0 Clerk salary review. The Clerk had emailed out the new pay figures prior to the meeting which amounted to an increase from £417.88 per month to £488.88 to be backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> June. Members approved unanimously. **Action: Clerk to email Accountant to update salary from Dec 1<sup>st</sup>.**

11.0 **Adopting the Budget/Precept 2024/2025** Clerk to report.

Prior to the meeting the Clerk emailed out to all members the Budget and Precept Report for 2024/2025 for their consideration. Members discussed the position concerning the reduction in the lighting grant which will be discontinued at the end of 2025. In the future this will need to be covered via an increase in the Precept unless other grants become available.

**Motion 1:** To approve the budget for 2024/2025 as laid out in the “Budget for 2024/2025” spreadsheet and report.

**Resolved:** The Parish Council **Resolved** to approve the budget for 2024/2025 as laid out in the “Budget for 2024/2025” spreadsheet and report.

**Motion 2:** To approve the Precept for 2024/2025 of £13,780.

**Resolved:** The Parish Council **Resolved** to approve the Precept for 2024/2025 of £13,780 as laid out in the Budget Precept spreadsheet and report.

## **12.0 Any Other Business**

This is for information only - no decisions can be made on matters raised.

12.1 Pitstock Solar Farm pre-application presentation 7/11/2023 and consultation event 14/11/2023 which had been attended by Cllr Trott, Cllr Culver and Liz Cruise was discussed in respect of a forthcoming planning application when we will have the opportunity to submit comments.

## **12.2 Notification of Meetings**

Swale Joint Transportation Board meeting is scheduled to take place on Monday 4/12/2023 5.30 pm. Swale House.

Western Area Committee meeting – hybrid meeting to be held Swale House 30/11/2023 7 pm – **Action: Clerk to forward apologies for this meeting.**

KALC SAC meeting to be held Swale House 12/12/2023 7pm. – **Cllr Clifton to attend on behalf of Bapchild Parish Council – Clerk to confirm with Nicola Butling, Secretary**

12.3 Although discussed under AOB, a resident reported a possible empty property and the overgrown garden of a property in St Laurence Close. **Action: – The Clerk to email Southern Housing to enquire whether this property is in their portfolio and if it is an empty property.**

**13. Date of Next Meeting: PROPOSED DATE 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024 – SUBJECT TO CHANGE DUE TO AVAILABILITY OF THE ANTONY ROOM.**

**IMPORTANT UPDATE TO POINT 13 – Next meeting date confirmed as 16<sup>th</sup> January 2024 – venue will be The Antony Room.**

There being no further business, Cllr Trott thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting closed at 10.00pm.

Signed:

Date:

Chair: Bapchild Parish Council