

Minutes of the Penshurst Annual Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 7 May 2024 at 7.00 pm in Penshurst Village Hall.

1. PRESENT: Cllrs A Campbell (Chairman); Mrs D Broad, N Furnell, R Gerard-Sharp, J Horsford, D Howard, R Rees, B Townsend

2. APOLOGIES: Ms S Jolly; Cllr R Rees advised late arrival.

In attendance:

3. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN/VICE-CHAIRMAN & Representatives:

Chairman: Cllr Mrs Broad Nominated Cllr Campbell, Cllr Gerard-Sharp seconded the nomination which was unanimously approved by the other members. Cllr Campbell subsequently signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office which was witnessed by the Clerk.

Vice-Chairman: Cllr Rees was nominated by Cllr Townsend, seconded by Cllr Horsford and unanimously approved by the other members.

Responsible Finance Officer: Mrs Evelyn Divall – Parish Clerk was unanimously appointed as RFO for the ensuing year. Cllr Townsend thanked the Clerk for her work in relation to the finances of the PC on behalf of the members of the council. This was much appreciated.

Appointment of Representatives:

It was unanimously agreed the following councillors would undertake the following areas of responsibility:

KALC Representatives:	Cllrs Horsford and Howard
Penshurst & Fordcombe Village Hall:	Cllrs Gerard-Sharp & Townsend
Planning Representatives:	Whole council, Cllrs Jolly and Mrs Broad to liaise regarding meetings.
Transport/Speedwatch Forum:	Cllrs Campbell & Rees, Mr R Sellings (Co-opted resident)
Footpath/ Bridle Path Representative:	Cllrs Jolly and Mrs Broad
Allotments:	Cllr Campbell
Highways:	Whole council: Cllrs Campbell, Horsford and Townsend
Play Area:	Cllrs S Jolly, Townsend & Horsford
Alms Houses:	Cllrs Rees & Howard
Emergency/Resilience Planning	Cllrs Campbell & Gerard-Sharp
Becket Trust:	Cllr Rees
Gatwick:	Cllr Howard (Reports from Charles Lloyd/SDCllr Streatfeild)
Neighbourhood Watch:	Cllr Furnell

Chairman signed Acceptance of Office form:

4. Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on 15 April 2024, having been circulated, were unanimously approved and signed by the Chairman.

Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on 17 April 2023 were signed, having been approved for signature at meeting held on 15 April 2024.

Minutes of the 2024 Annual Parish Meeting: These were noted and would be signed at the 2025 Meeting.

5. Declarations of interests in agenda items: No interests were recorded.

OPEN SESSION:

Concerns were raised with regard to a recent planning application the PC had supported after the introduction of mutually agreed conditions relating to noise, traffic and external working. It was now proposed that four of the conditions be removed, in view of this the PC would submit a comment regarding the removal of the conditions which may mean that they could no longer support the application and would advise the Planning Officer accordingly. Chairman to draft response.

6. KCCllr Mrs Margot McArthur: Cllr Mrs McArthur confirmed that a re-organisation of Highways was currently being undertaken which was anticipated to take six months. The current condition of the roads in Penshurst and Fordcombe and neighbouring parishes in Leigh and towards Bidborough was considered to be appalling, problems with continually running water on Spring Hill was also unacceptable, Cllr Mrs McArthur to liaise with Cllr Horsford regarding a site visit.

7. SDCCllr R Streatfeild: Cllr Streatfeild reported that a new leader was to be appointed at SDC – Mr Roddy Hogarth. He confirmed that Swanley Leisure centre would be upgraded; the eastern area of the High Street in Sevenoaks would benefit from proposed new building project; the 50th Anniversary of Sevenoaks Rural and Urban councils becoming Sevenoaks District Council was imminent. SDC Annual General Meeting would be held on the 14 May at 7.30 pm, public access on line was possible. He had been working with Cllr Rees to support the Becket Trust. The judicial review relating to Kingdom had currently permitted the complainant to consider making a plea for a review of the applicant's complaint. It had been noted that the PC and SDCCllr had acted acceptably in relation to the issue. Environmental Health had stated that the applicant had submitted insufficient information with regard to the noise issues, this was therefore being repeated. The question of SDC and the compulsory purchase of land they owned was under consideration currently, it was too early in the procedure to know the outcome of stakeholders owning one piece of land.

8. PC Harry Kemp: Community Events: PC Kemp had attended Annual refresher training during the month; as well as regular patrol of all Beat areas, attending burglary locations, assisting response teams with High Risk missing people and RTCs, there had been a few key events. PC Kemp had attended Edenbridge Police and Community Together meeting, this brings member of the Town Council, Councillors, partner agencies and community members to discuss any matter within the Town; he was also out on the beat with Edenbridge Community Warden, Kevin, to attend areas of ADB and recent criminal damage. Children Centred Policing Team had the addition of another member – PC Harrison who is an incredibly experienced officer with a wealth of knowledge around ASB. He will be working alongside PCSO Darling to provide support and advice to young people and their families.

9. Neighbourhood Watch: Members were aware of a serious issue involving criminal activity in the Edenbridge/Hever area recently. Cllr Furnell provided information on the various e.watch-co. sites and advised that the crime level in the area was generally low but members were concerned at some of the serious crime that had occurred.

10. Matters Arising:

(i) Affordable Housing: Cllr Streatfeild reported that he and the PC had been thanked for the support Becket Trust had received in order to be appointed as Preferred Partners with SDC in connection with affordable housing provision. They were currently looking at sites that might be suitable for small projects and it was noted it was the 50th Anniversary this year. English Rural Housing would be producing a draft scheme for consultation on the New Road site. The PC did not anticipate having any detailed information regarding possible numbers or types of build available for further consultation until the late summer/autumn.

(ii) Tree Surgery – Penshurst Churchyard: Tree surgery application submitted to SDC by clerk for approval of work. Confirmation of submission received, six-week notice of intention to carry out work from date of service of notice applies. The contractor and Estate Manager were liaising with regard to timing and method of working.

(iii) Speeding: ED had received a complaint from a parishioners regarding speeding traffic in Fordcombe, this had been one of the sites identified as a problem area during the four checks undertaken by KCC during the early part of the year. ED had received confirmation that this site was being

considered, a form was provided for ED to complete and return in support of the request which would be actioned without delay.

11. PLANNING: Planning Applications:

24/00797/FUL Land South Of Hallborough, Poundsbridge, Penshurst: Erection of a forestry and wood workers workshop with solar arrays. Hardstanding and landscaping.

24/00941/ADJ: Spire Tunbridge Wells Hospital, Fordcombe Road, Fordcombe: Prior Notification for installation of roof mounted solar array (218 No PV solar panels with a maximum output of 91.56 kWp). **No Objection Raised**

SE24/00486/FUL: The Old Laundry, Penshurst Road, Penshurst, Kent: Demolition of existing outbuilding and erection of 2 Oak framed. Existing Block Plan and Outbuilding Plans received on 8th April 2024

SE24/00263/FUL: Land at Keepers Cottage, Penshurst Road, Penshurst: Demolition of existing cottage; erection of replacement dwelling and outbuilding with associated works. **Amendment to application: Re-consultation for this application required to ensure the consultation period includes the upcoming bank holidays on 29th March and 1st April.**

REFUSED

SE24/00384/HOUSE: King Meadows, Fordcombe Road, Fordcombe: Proposed side extension, rear in-fill extension, alterations to porch, replacement of garage, proposed swimming pool, pool house and associated landscaping. **REFUSED**

SE24/00296/HOUSE: Bridge House, Rogues Hill, Penshurst: Replacement of existing single storey rear extension with new raised single storey rear extension, internal alterations, alterations to fenestration, relocation of garage and alterations to landscaping/site levels. **Please Note:** The applicant has now provided an Arboricultural Survey document following comments by the Tree Officer. **GRANTED**

SE/24/00277: Gardeners Annexe, Little Chart, Smarts Hill, Penshurst: Single storey extensions and alterations roof including creation of habitable space and insertion of 3no. dormer windows with associated works. **GRANTED**

SE/24/00180/LDCPR: Land South West Of Bacchus Barn, Grove Road, Penshurst: Improvement of existing private way. **REFUSED**

24/00208/LDCPR: 4 Pioneer Cottages, Smarts Hill, Penshurst: Erection of 3m single storey extension to project solely beyond original rear wall of house, removal of two existing outbuildings and erection of two outbuildings comprising a potting shed/garden store and Home office with garden room. **GRANTED**

24/00173/LBCALT: Hill Corner Cottage, The Lane, Fordcombe: Front door replacement. **Application no longer considered valid:** No existing and proposed plans provided. Two drawings are on file but these are identical and there is no label to say if they are existing or proposed. No block plan proposed provided showing which external door this application relates to. Application re-validated.

GRANTED

23/03652: Land West Of Drummond Hall, Penshurst Road, Penshurst: Variation of Condition 1 (land restoration timescale) of 23/01274/CONVAR related to 21/00195/FUL (Erection of a temporary access road off the B2176 into the curtilage of Drummond Hall, including a temporary compound area.) for the date for the restoration of the land to be amended to 30 June 2024.

Appeals:

APP/G2245/D/23/3329958: Palmers Cottage, The Lane, Fordcombe: Proposed single storey rear extension with rooflight. Appeal to Secretary of State against SDC refusal: **23/00073/RFPLN:** Proposed single storey rear extension with rooflight. **APPEAL DISMISSED**

SE/24/00025/CHGADD STREET NAMING & NUMBERING - SECTION 64 TOWN IMPROVEMENTS ACT 1847 **Site:** Penshurst Off Road Cycling Club, Grove Road, Penshurst **New Address** Treetops, Grove Road, Penshurst, TN11 8DU. **UPRN: 050002019006**

Tree Surgery:

24/00697/WTPO: Beech Glade, Doubleton Lane, Penshurst: Removal of 2 dead dangerous trees and general dead wood removal.

24/01164/WTPO: Beech Glade Doubleton Lane Penshurst: Works to various trees.

24/01134/WTCA: Churchyard, Penshurst: Penshurst Parish Council: Various works to trees.

12. HIGHWAYS

799971: Kennards, Leigh: Numerous potholes and delaminating of road surface. 2 reports of damage to cars received, issue reported.

779936/791879: New Road – Drains blocked with polystyrene and grids covered with growing grass and mud; inspected 9 February 2024. Further report submitted 12 March 2024. Being investigated 13.3.24

734351: Rogues Hill: Gulley scheduled for cleaning under timed programmed time. Investigated 17.7.23

754951: Silcocks-Cleve House: Drains blocked and overflowing – previously reported. Issue investigated as of 3 November, passed to Tunbridge Wells.

755185: Finches, Fordcombe Road: Flooding due to blocked Drain/Gulley. Issue under investigation 3.11.2023.

756211: The Lane, Fordcombe: Sinking length of road adjacent to ditch reported plus water leak – marked as not Highways and past to others; further report submitted under reference 759381 providing more detailed information after site visit. Listed as not highways and passed to others for action. Investigated 7.11.23 *Notification received of road closure to complete work.*

753905 Coopers Lane: Work completed 3.11.2023: **754869/758601:** Flooding from adjacent fields affecting properties along the lane. Further investigations on 15 November

746512/762493 : Chafford Lane: Overgrown hedges restricting width for pedestrians using route: Action on the other is currently awaited, passed to enforcement for a S154 process

762786: Blocked Drains: Blocked with leaves along the corner from the Penshurst Road round the corner resulting in water running down into the High Street. Under Investigation 5.12.2023

770746: Rogues Hill: Drainage and Flooding, Blocked Drain/Gully: Under investigation as of 5.1.2024, drain clearance of run of drains downhill awaited.

781732: Bridge – Gate House/Bottom Rogues Hill: Damaged by car collisions. Confirmation that an inspection would be undertaken, photos appeared only to show superficial damage. Inspected 15.2.24

789182/789751: New Road: Potholes – one centrally in road, others along the line of the hedgerow. Work carried out 6 & 7 March.

791387: New Road, Penshurst: Blocked drains causing flooding from Burzes Cottages towards Penshurst. Investigation 12.3.2024

797576: Saints Hill Junction: Pothole on Penshurst approach side.

798224: Grove Road – Junction near footpath access, broken branch overhanging carriageway, considered dangerous. Work completed 4.4.2024

795035: Damaged Sign: Junction near Saints Hill between New Road and Colliersland Bridge – road sign knocked down but monumental stone in situ. Investigated 2.3.24

Closure of The Lane: 794731 & 779993 – further update sought of proposed and/or ongoing work. Under investigation.

Openreach - Temporary Road Closure - Poundsbridge Lane, Penshurst - 18th April 2024 for 1 day between 09.30hrs and 15.30hrs: The road will be closed between B2176 Penshurst Road and Honeyfield Cottage. The alternative route is via Poundsbridge Lane, B2176 Penshurst Road, Barden Road, Speldhurst Hill, Poundsbridge and vice versa. Pedestrian access will be maintained during the works. The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while works are undertaken by Openreach.

2/2 [ID:7961488]: / 801663 – Roadway Opposite Leicester Square: Water Access Cover/Pothole: Reported to S E Water and Highways for repair.

CHAFFORD LANE, FORDCOMBE (Surface Dressing): 23/07/2024 – 31/07/2024

Road closed between Fordcombe Road and Bradley Road. A diversion will be in place via B2188 Spring Hill, Sandfield Road and Walters Green Road.

07:00 – 19:00 Weekdays.

801957: Spring Hill: Continuous flow of water downhill, possible blocked drain/culverts.

804865: Opposite Leicester Square: Road route sign turned round.

805051: Penshurst Road: Roadwork hole left with signage in situ since February.

13. Finance/Accounts: The following accounts were presented and unanimously approved for payment.

Mrs J Wheelwright FCCA
Blackhawk Security

Internal Audit Fee 2023/24
CCTV Supply/Labour Claim

£745.00
£1399.64

a. Approval of Accounts for submission to External Auditors – Mazars LLP, Newcastle.

Members approved the accounts as presented.

(i) Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24: The Internal Audit had been prepared and completed by the Parish Councils appointed auditor on the 1 May for the year 2023/2024, this was circulated to members together with copies of all documentation required in support of the AGAR document.

Issues noted 2022/23: Completion of all Boxes: All boxes filled as requested, including those requiring Nil or N/A.

PC Emails: Official PC emails have been made available to all councillors plus the clerk.

Accessibility Regulations: We have noted on the website document the point that it is a scan and will not therefore be fully compliant with the Accessibility Regulations.

This was received and noted.

(ii) External Audit: Signing and Approval of Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24 (AGAR Form 3), supporting documentation had been prepared by the RFO, internally audited and circulated to members prior to the meeting with a copy of the internal audit. Chairman and Responsible Finance Officer signed documentation in accordance with instructions received from the company appointed to carry out the External Audit.

(iii) Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2023/24, this had been circulated to members prior to the meeting, all information provided listed on the Statement was agreed and approved, the Chairman and Responsible Finance Officer signed the document.

(iv) Section 2 – Accounting Statements - 2023/24: The form had been completed together with the documentation prepared for submission to the Auditors. This was approved by the members and signed by the Chairman and the Responsible Finance Officer.

(v): Exercise of Public Rights: RFO confirmed the dates had been set for this procedure as the 3 June – 12 July 2024, notification would be posted on the PC Website on the 2 June.

External Audit: It was agreed that the above documentation be forwarded to the External Auditor via email are required by the Clerk.

(b) Banking Arrangements: ED advised that the original forms acknowledged as being received for verification had not been found on the bank system when she checked with them on the morning of the meeting, further information was awaited

(c) Insurance: Clerk forwarded information regarding the Asset List and previous premium to Cllr Howard for assistance with obtaining a further quotation, ED had subsequently emailed the information to a company provided by Cllr Howard for a quotation which was currently awaited.

(d) Updated PC Policies on Website: Ongoing procedure. ED confirmed an update was being undertaken in accordance with approved NALC timescale, when available she would provide this for consideration.

(e) Play Area: Suggestions for two items to suit the play area were circulated to members prior to the meeting together with costs for supply only or supply and installation.

Quotation had been received from Kompan for 2 Items: Play Panel 1 – Music, Modern; Play Panel 2, Classic Emotion 90cm. The total cost was £5392.90 but a discount for project of £826 had been negotiated. Final cost £5480.28 (VAT913.38 – to be reclaimed) Basic cost £4566.90 supplied and installed. ED had obtained a Grant of £4K towards the cost of the equipment. It was unanimously agreed that the project be approved.

(f) **KSS Air Ambulance Charity: Request for Grant of £350.** Clerk provided information relating to the service which had applied for a Grant of £350 towards the cost of running the service. The Emergency Medical facility was available 24/7, 365 days a year. 1414 last year were in Kent. Members considered the request and were aware of the work of the organisation, the PC rarely donated PC funds to charities but would make an exception in this instance. It was unanimously agreed that the sum of £350 be provided as a payment from the S137 provision.

14. Any Other Business:

- a. **Kingdom:** An alteration to the licencing had been applied for
- b. **Village Parking;** Problems had been caused by heavy traffic attending the Craft Fair at the weekend, members were aware that stewards were assisting with the parking facility.
- c. **PC Contractors.** Cllr Townsend confirmed the sad death of the wife of the PC contractor who looked after the churchyards for the parish, the Clerk had sent a card of condolences to the family on behalf of everyone.

Meeting concluded 8.55 pm

Next meeting 3.6.2024

**FURTHER DATES FOR BULK REFUSE COLLECTIONS FOR THE YEAR:
15 JUNE, 14 SEPTEMBER AND 9 NOVEMBER.**