

Cliffsend Parish Council

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

Held on Thursday 10th December 2020 at 7.30pm via Zoom.

Meetings of the Council are recorded. AV recordings are retained only until draft minutes are adopted as a true record.

Present – Cllr Rogers (Chair), Cllr Ashley, Cllr Harrison, Cllr Mortimer, Cllr Lyon, Cllr Pooley, Alison Willoughby-Browne (Clerk), 2 members of the public.

- 78/20-21 Welcome and apologies for absence** - DCllr Rogers, PCSO Litchfield and Cllr Forrest.
- 79/20-21 Declarations of interest** - Cllr Ashley and Cllr Pooley - Village Hall.
- 80/20-21 Adoption of the minutes of 12th November 2020 as being a true record** - 12th November minutes proposed by Cllr Harrison and seconded by Cllr Mortimer, all in favour. Chairman to sign the minutes as a true record.
- 81/20-21 Matters arising from the above minutes** - none.
- 82/20-21 Working Party & Councillor Reports** -
PCSO - via email, would like to get Speedwatch up and running again, if anyone is interested the link is - www.communityspeedwatch.org/WIZ-FRONT-GetInvolved-exist-1.php There is online training, once restrictions ease checks will be set up. Nationwide Alcohol and Drug driving campaign starts 1st December to 1st January.

This year PCSO Litchfield entered Ramsgate into the Southeast in Bloom competition and received a Silver-Gilt award. A great community project, it would be good for Cliffsend to enter in 2021. **To be discussed at next meeting.**

After the reporting of antisocial behaviour, PCSOs have attended the playground into the night, they will continue to do so and to monitor drug misuse in Marjorie Chapman Meadow, PCSO Litchfield confirmed that the smoking of weed is still illegal. Any problems should be called in at time of occurrence; calls to Kent Police should be 999 - crime in progress, 101 - information or to report crime, or online via Kent Police website. With Christmas approaching be mindful of leaving presents on show and empty boxes outside.

Highways – report circulated.

Finance – precept submission is this month. After the December Finance meeting, the budget review was circulated to all Councillors. It was explained that this is a statement of intention, not necessarily permission to spend money as to do so agreement of the Council must be obtained. If it is not in the budget then it cannot be spent.

Due to the current financial situation, Cllr Ashley suggested that the precept should not be increased this year, the majority were in agreement.

Each category of the budget review was analysed, the budget for this year and the actual income and expenditure was compared with the proposed 2021-2022 budget.

Funds will be made available for a potential office/meeting place in the Village Hall. Insurance is a large expense, **Clerk to obtain insurance quotations for comparison**. Next year's budget will show a deficit of about £7k which mirrors the under-spend from this year.

Acceptance of the figures, next year's budget and for the precept to remain static was proposed by Cllr Lyon, seconded by Cllr Pooley, unanimous.

Bank account statement comparison with bank reconciliation – distributed to all Councillors. Cllr Lyon checked this prior to the meeting and initialled both documents; the account balance is £48,099.42 (end of November). Cllr Rogers proposed support of the figures, Cllr Mortimer seconded, all in favour.

Meadow and Open Spaces – discussed the Jubilee bench relocation, agreed that the bench should be moved but, ideally, not out of the meadow – north border? **Clerk/Cllr Rogers to update landowner on progress of discussions and to ask whether moving to an alternative location would be acceptable.**

Youth – Cllr Pooley has considered options for the village.

83/20-21 **Statement from Chairman: Code of Conduct -**

The Chairman delivered a short statement regarding complaints concerning the conduct of Councillors. The Chairman reminded all Councillors of their responsibilities and need to abide by the various protocols they have accepted, including the *Code of Conduct* and *Communications Policy*. In particular, Councillors should refrain from becoming embroiled in matters aired on social media which can frequently lead to inappropriate exchanges.

The Council has received an email from a resident alleging that a Parish Councillor behaved improperly, having made a defamatory post to a local Facebook site. The Chairman has investigated the complaint and taken into consideration other views as to what was said, by whom and when.

The complaint lodged on 11th November stems from a meeting held a week earlier on 4th November regarding the management of the Village Hall. There appears to have been heated exchanges. The Councillor was not present. Other aspects of the complaint relating to CCTV availability are outside the remit of the Parish Council.

In view of the time lapse and absence of any supportive evidence, the Chairman has advised the complainant that there seems no credible grounds for further action by the Council.

Separately, the Council was advised that a complaint had been made to TDC that a Parish Councillor had behaved in an intimidating and threatening manner. The Monitoring Officer has advised, after due consideration, as follows - 'The Standards Assessment Sub-Committee recommended that Democratic Services would write to the claimant and the accused, explaining that no further action will be taken by the Council as the incident has already been referred to the police.' It is considered inappropriate for the Parish Council to comment further.

84/20-21 **Financial Matters –**

Cllrs Lyon and Harrison had previously checked the following payments with supporting documents.

Payee	Description	Invoice No	Method	VAT	Excl VAT	Total
Cllr Rogers	Printer Cartridge	INVZAQY51	Transfer	5.00	25.02	30.02
Cloughs	Christmas Tree	1316	Transfer	11.00	55.00	66.00
KCC	Traffic Regulation Order	900118437	Transfer	0.00	1780.00	1780.00
£6kCllr Ashley	Christmas Decorations	-	Transfer	14.32	246.94	261.26
Cllr Forrest	Winter Bedding Plants	-	Transfer	3.36	16.64	20.00
CVH	Easter Event 2019*	-	Transfer	0.00	300.00	300.00
Total for Month				33.68	2423.60	2457.28

* Previous Council agreed to spend up to £300 on an Easter event, this was not paid from Council funds, it transpired that the Village Hall paid over £300 for the event. Proposed that this be rectified by Cllr Rogers, seconded by Cllr Mortimer, all in favour. Acceptance of the payments was proposed by Cllr Mortimer, seconded by Cllr Harrison, carried unanimously.

All councillors joined in an expression of appreciation for the efforts volunteered by various community members to decorate the Village Hall and surrounds in festive fashion.

85/20-21 Public Questions - resident suggested that decisions on the Jubilee bench and Southern Water bench would be prudent. Cllr Lyon recommended the north side of the meadow, supported by Cllr Ashley – between gates and picnic benches. Cllr Ashley mooted the green opposite Village Hall for the Southern Water bench. A decision for both will be deferred until the new year.

86/20-21 Planning Applications -

- FH/TH/20/1257 51 Foads Hill (side extension, conversion of garage)
- FH/TH/20/1540 1 Lavender Lane (Retrospective - erection of double carport)
- FH/TH/20/1607 9 Sceales Drive (porch, garage to habitable accommodation)
- F/TH/20/1145 Sportsman Inn (comments by 16th December 2020)
Difficult to see what has been amended since previous application. Cllr Mortimer stated that the development is still too high. **Clerk to write to DCllr Rogers to ask for confirmation that it will be called-in.** A further objection to be submitted.

Permission for development of 23 Foads Hill – change of use from nursery to residential – has been refused.

87/20-21 Current Topics -

Meadow matters – TDC offered to cut the tree overhanging the flat roof of Village Hall, requested after Christmas as lights are attached to tree. **Cllr Lyon to inform TDC.**

Traffic Regulation Order – Cllr Lyon expressed disappointment as the area she had been fighting for has not been included. The invoice (payments schedule) is for a survey before any works are carried out on the areas assigned double-yellow lines. £2k has been funded by KCC Councillors, the Parish Council to fund remainder. Cllr Forrest has distributed plans of where the lines are to be and has negotiated funding for final works from Southern Water, S106 monies could be pursued.

Proposed to extend the meeting for 15 minutes; Cllr Harrison, seconded by Cllr Rogers, majority agreed, motion carried.

Cllr Ashley proposed that we move forward with the survey, Cllr Rogers seconded, motion carried.

Budget/Precept for 2021/2022 – discussed in Finance report.

Defibrillator – the cabinet was opened in an emergency situation, fortunately for the patient, the defibrillator wasn't required. There was difficulty re-opening the cabinet, an electrician has examined cabinet and advised that a specialist replaces the keypad lock, if necessary. Key for defibrillator held with Clerk, Cllr Ashley suggested a key be kept at the Village Hall. Council telephone number is on the front of cabinet in case difficulties are experienced.

Councillor/Clerk Training – **Cllr Harrison to pursue training opportunities.**

Village Hall support – our only remaining asset, we need to look after it. The fabric and finances are not in a good shape. As a Trustee, Cllr Ashley updated the Council; there is a little in reserve, but it won't be enough to fund the work required. Have quite a few volunteers.

Cllr Rogers suggested ways in which the Parish Council could support - remuneration for the administrative support provided by Clerk, can then give valuable support to the Village Hall as an asset. Funding is being explored, Cllr Harrison offered her support. Cllr Rogers proposed that in order to support the Management Committee/Trustees between now and the end of the year, the Parish Council be prepared to fund up to 45 hours of the Clerk's time at current rate, **Clerk to advise Vice-Chairman how many hours spent bringing accounts and assets register into line**, will amount to no more than £540. Cllr Mortimer seconded, unanimous amongst those able to vote, quorate.

Website information permissions – form circulated to Councillors for return to Clerk.

88/20-21 Clerk's Reports -

2 Old Hall Drive; 16th November resident given 28 days to remove vehicles in breach of enforcement notice.

Council had received complaints about the condition of the Hugin, and the delay in it being covered. TDC reported that it was scheduled to cover but an operative was stung by a European hornet; have to wait for hornets to become docile, should be soon. Next year more attention will be given, possibly even the painting of the shields.

89/20-21 Correspondence Received -

- Kent Community Foundation – Knock and Check Campaign; website/noticeboards.
- KCC – mental health crisis support cards; website and noticeboards.
- Resident – closure of Cottington Road for 3 months; published. Cllr Harrison expressed concern about the Thanet Parkway development and heavy vehicles entering/exiting the site by the bridge, dangerous and should have lights to control traffic. **Clerk to report to Network Rail.**
- Resident – smoking of skunk in meadow; discussed re' Jubilee Bench.
- Resident – removal of trees at rear of Richardson Way; notified of Network Rail 0-7m vegetation clearance.
- Clerk to Monkton Parish Council – broadband issues in Monkton, similar to Cliffsend?
- Former Village Shop tenant – business rates; enquiry passed on to Village Hall Trustee.
- Kent's Police and Crime Commissioner – Annual Policing Survey; to publish.
- Sanderson Weatherall LLP – development of 23 Foads Hill (Nursery); to discuss – any community uses for the property? **Views to be submitted to the Clerk.**

The meeting concluded at 21:39

Date of next meeting – **14th January 2021**