

**MINUTES OF TROTTISCLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY 3 OCTOBER 2024 at 7.30PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL**

PRESENT:

David Gaunt - Chairman (DG), Alan Palmer (ALP) (arrived 8.01pm), Alison Prountzos (AP), Louise Leydon (LL) and Richard Vallance (RV)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs. Louise Goldsmith (Clerk), Miss Charlie Gavin (Incoming Clerk)
County Councillor Sarah Hohler, Borough Councillors Robin Betts and Martin Coffin (arrived 7.41pm)

80/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Cllrs. Mills and Shaw and the reasons for absence were accepted.

81/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

None received.

82/24 INTENTION TO RECORD THE MEETING

The Clerk advised that there have been no requests to record the meeting.

83/24 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was **resolved** that DG sign the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 5 September 2024 as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

84/24] OPEN SESSION:

A member of the public requested that the flag on the village green is replaced.

A member of the public asked about the status of Green Lane in terms of which areas are adopted and which areas are privately owned.

Cllr. Leydon read out communication from a member of the public which stated that Green Lane had been resurfaced in the past from grant funding acquired by KCC.

The Clerk has received further communication from a resident asking if the Parish Council can assist with funding the resurfacing of Green Lane.

85/24 REPORTS

a) **County Councillor:**

KCC are concerned that the new house building requirement will particularly hit four Kent Districts. (Sevenoaks, Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge and Malling , Dover. The impact of VAT on public schools is likely to be felt in Grammar Schools. There are 95 independent schools, many are prep schools with under 200 pupils. It is estimated that 50% of these could close, putting more pressure on primary schools in the state sector. School transport costs are now on budget as new processes have kicked in. There has been a long consultation on community wardens with the need to reduce expenditure while recognising the value the wardens bring to our more deprived areas. If you want a community warden, or an extra one, for your own area you may fund one, contact communitywardenreview@kent.gov.uk. A media release notes that up to 18,000 eligible Kent households are still not claiming Pension Credit. KCC's Leader is urging everyone who is entitled to claim Pension Credit to make sure they are signed up as soon as possible. Pension credit is, on average, £186 a month and can also open the door to other benefits. It is for those who have reached state

pension age and are on the lowest income. There are a number of eligibility requirements but, as a starting point, if you are retired and have income of less than £218 a week as an individual, or £332 as a couple, you could be eligible. In recent years KCC have worked with the District, Borough and City Council partners to support them in adopting systems which enable them to identify people who may be eligible for Pension Credit but have not applied for it. In 2023 around 400 additional households were identified to complete an application, resulting in them claiming an average of £300 a month. In this County, Kent's pensioners could be missing out on up to an unclaimed £68 million. Kent's Money Advice Hubs, located across the county, are on hand to support and advise on Pension Credit eligibility and applications. The service can be accessed Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm. Residents can also find more information and a link to the application process on the KCC website by visiting: www.kent.gov.uk/pensioncredit. Digital Kent has also launched a new initiative to help people get online who might not have access to technology, nor have the confidence to try. It's called Get Digital. There are free workshops and Digital Champions on hand to support at www.kent.gov.uk/getdigital. Borough Councillor Robin Betts mentioned the disruption being caused by the roadworks at Wrotham Heath and asked if County Councillor Sarah Hohler could request that works take place at the weekend to speed up the operation. Cllr. Gaunt questioned the need for all the new additional white lining in the village. Particularly as some roads need resurfacing. Many residents complained about the noise as the relining took place late at night.

8.01pm Cllr Palmer arrived at the meeting

b) Borough Councillors:

Borough Councillor Martin Coffin explained that the consultation on the Local Transport Plan ends on the 8 September 2024. TMBC has submitted a response to the consultation and is supporting the junction 5 slips proposal. TMBC has just purchased a thermal imaging camera which Parish Councils can borrow free of charge for one week or hire for longer periods. The thermal imaging cameras can be used to identify heat loss in public buildings. The new Government has increased the housing target for TMBC from 820 new homes per year to 1,157 per year which represents a 29% increase. This has had a direct effect on the development of the Local Plan. TMBC is having to revisit the Regulation 18B stage and reconsult as part of a further call for sites exercise to try and accommodate the new targets. The Duty to Co-operate has also being diluted with the new Government wanting to see boroughs working together to achieve overall housing targets. TMBC is investing in a project to change all the lighting in TMBC car parks to LED. The LED lights will not only be more energy efficient but will provide better and brighter lighting for users of these car parks. TMBC has just gone out to tender for a £1.5m decarbonisation project for Larkfield Leisure Centre, the works are expected to take place next Spring. As part of the Tonbridge Town Centre regeneration programme TMBC is looking to replace the inefficient Angel Centre with a state of the art carbon neutral building. Borough Councillor Robin Betts advised Members that all funding available under the West Kent Rural Grants Scheme has now been awarded.

8.15pm County Councillor Sarah Hohler and Borough Councillors Martin Coffin and Robin Betts.

c) Kent Police: On Saturday 7 September 2024 somebody damaged the roof tiles of a residential property in Taylors Place

86/24] CLERKS REPORT/PAST MATTERS (Information purposes only)

1] The Clerk reported that the defibrillator has been checked and is fully operational. The Circuit has been updated.

87/24] PLANNING

- a) Applications:
 - 1] 24/01538/PA: Garth Down, Church Lane, Trottiscliffe
Lawful Development Certificate Proposed: Erection of garden wall between Garth Down main dwelling and Prunelle Garage to replace a fir tree hedge. Erection of dwarf highway alongside Church Lane.
Resolved: No objection.
 - 2] 24/01460/PA: Land North of Allotments, Green Lane, Trottiscliffe
Erection weather proof timber barn for the purposes of educational use for the community farm charity at Green Lane, Trottiscliffe.
Resolved: Support.
 - 3] 24/01543/PA: Elpatos, Pilgrims Way, Trottiscliffe
Proposed roof alterations to allow new rear dormer.
Resolved: No objection. Observation that the block plan is incorrect.
- b) Approvals: None to consider.
- c) Refusals: None to consider.
- d) Withdrawn applications:
 - 1] 23/03328: The Little Cottage, Pilgrims Way, Trottiscliffe
Two storey and part single storey rear extension. Hip to gable loft conversion with barn hips and new dormers to front and rear elevations.
- e) **Other Planning Issues:**
 - 1] 23/00146/WORKM: Hillside, Pilgrims Way:
Enforcement has advised that they are unable to provide an update on when formal enforcement action will be taken regarding an unauthorised stable building which has been erected along with the creation of a sand school in lieu of refused planning application TM/22/00314/FL.
 - 2] Land West of Roughetts Road: A planning application for the proposed Extraction of aggregate (sand) has not yet been submitted.

88/24] RESOLUTIONS

1. **Staffing:**
 - a) To receive feedback from the interview panel
Interviews were held on Friday 13 August 2024. A template list of questions was used for each candidate and a scoring matrix was applied. In between meetings it was agreed to appoint Charlie Gavin.
Resolved: To ratify a decision between meetings to appoint Charlie Gavin as the new Clerk.
 - b) To sign the contract for the new Clerk
The Clerk has issued a contract to the incoming Clerk which she has signed.
Resolved: The Chair to sign the contract for the new Clerk on behalf of the Parish Council.
 - c) To agree the leaving date for the outgoing Clerk
It was agreed to agree a leaving date for the outgoing Clerk at the next meeting.
2. **Community Farm**
Members considered a revised licence circulated by the Clerk. It was noted that two of the Trustees of the Community Farm have already signed the licence.

Resolved: The Chair to sign the new licence and accompanying plan for the community farm. The Clerk to arrange for the two Trustees to sign the plan and to then forward the papers to the solicitor.

3. Tree Survey

Members considered three quotes obtained by the Clerk for the remedial works to the trees

Resolved: To accept a quote of £1,475.00 (excluding VAT) from Living Forest.

4. Tennis Club

It was noted that the solicitor has revised both leases in line with comments received. It was noted that the Courts Working Group is due to meet on the 8 October 2024 to discuss the revised lease.

5. Financial

a) To change the administrator on the Unity Trust Account

Resolved: The Clerk to submit a revised mandate to Unity Trust to add Charlie Gavin as an administrator of the account with the ability to just view the account and submit payments. Cllr. Gaunt signed the mandate and it was agreed for the Clerk to arrange for Cllrs. Mills and Shaw, who were not present at the meeting, to sign the mandate.

b) To consider a request for financial support from the community farm

Resolved: To make a donation of £250.00 towards the cost of the annual insurance for community farm.

c) To receive an update on .gov.uk domain

Deferred to the next meeting.

d) To receive the accounts

The accounts as at the 30 September 2024 were received.

e) To receive a bank reconciliation as at the 30 September 2024

The bank reconciliation as at the 30 September was received and signed by DG, in the absence of any other suitable Councillor being present, in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

f) To receive and authorise the payment list

RESOLVED: OS and DG to authorise the payments below online.

The payments list was checked and initialled by DG in accordance with the financial regulations.

Balances as at the 5 September 2024

National Savings Account £10,087.20

Unity Trust Account: £21,009.35

Receipts: TMBC second half of precept: £15,000.00

Electronic Payments

<u>Supplier</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Louise Goldsmith	Salary	£ 528.32
HMRC	Tax	£ 132.00
Louise Goldsmith	Expenses	£ 145.67
Gel Creative	Website maintenance	£ 100.00
Capel Groundcare	Grounds Maintenance	£ 690.40
Google	Email Accounts DD	£ 96.00
Total		£1,692.39

89/24] PARISH MATTERS:

9.07pm one member of the public left the meeting

1. Highways

a) Outstanding Faults:

PROW 240467863: Bridlepath on Pilgrims Way is unsafe: The Clerk has been advised that the fault has been passed to another provider. LL advised that discussions have now been held with the Chief Warden at Trosley Country Park who are responsible for the bridlepath. The possibility of the steps to the park being dual purpose for walkers and horses is being investigated.

b) New Faults to be reported

Potholes outside the George.
Status of Green Lane.

c) Highways Improvement Plan (HIP):

It was noted that Cllrs. Gaunt, Leydon and the Clerk and incoming Clerk are due to attend a virtual meeting with the Community Engagement Officer on Friday 18 October 2024 to discuss Pilgrims Way becoming part of the 20mph zone and the Parish Council funding additional drainage cleansing works in the parish.

d) Parish Seminar

The Clerk attended the virtual seminar held on Wednesday 2 October (9am – 1pm) and DG hopes to attend the in-person session due to be held on Wednesday 20 November.

2. Recreation Ground and Playground:

The Clerk has circulated a copy of the recent RoSPA report following the annual inspection. Members considered some quotes for the remedial works.

Resolved: To accept a quote from Capel Groundcare of £1,469.25 for the remedial works. The Clerk to check on the status of the cracked seat on one of the rockers.

3. Allotments:

The Clerk has notified the current allotment holders of the rent increase due from the 1 January 2026 and has posted a notice to this effect on the website. It was agreed to carry out a further inspection of the allotments in a few months.

4. Trottiscliffe School:

ALP reported that the school has been very busy since the new term has commenced. The annual community bonfire night will be held on the 2 November 2024 on the recreation ground. The Clerk to request a copy of the risk assessment and insurance.

5. Community Farm:

AP advised that the Community Farm was represented at The George beer festival and raised £1200. These funds will be put towards new pipework and taps for the water supply to the farm. A new Treasurer has been appointed. David Goodworth, local farmer, kindly donated 20 bales of hay to the farm.

9.30pm: *In accordance with standing orders it was agreed to continue with the meeting,*

6. Climate Change Initiatives:

Brooke Huggett, Transport Planner for KCC, has apologised for the delay in progressing a project to install EVCP in the village hall car park and is currently working with charge point operator colleagues to investigate the options for moving the next phase of sites forward and hopes to provide an update very soon.

90/24 REPRESENTATION AT MEETINGS

- a) **Courts Working Group:** RV reported that the next meeting is due to take place on the 8 October 2024.
- b) **Village Hall:** There has been no meeting.
- c) **Parish Partnership Panel:** There has been no meeting.
- d) **Standards Committee:** There has been no meeting.
- e) **KALC Area Committee:** The minutes of the meeting held on the 26 September 2024 will be circulated.
- f) **Trosley Liaison Group:** LL reported back from the bi-annual meeting which was held on the 2 October 2024. LL raised the ongoing issue with the bridleways from The Pilgrims and some solutions were discussed. Logs are now available to purchase at the park. Some trees are suffering from ash die back and will need to be removed. The play park surface will be replaced with wetpour as the bark is not weathering well. There are now 32 goats at Trosley County Park. The park was given a gold award by the South and South East in Bloom and the park now benefits from a Green Flag award which is the benchmark international standard for publicly accessible parks. In total 445 people attended the six summer events which raised £1700 for the park. The park also hosted events for families on low income. The Café is doing really well and it was suggested that they would welcome visits from schools.

91/24] CORRESPONDENCE/CONSULTATIONS

- a) For Information
 - 1] Area 2 Planning Committee: 30 October 2024
 - 2] Joint Transportation Board: 2 December 2024
 - 3] Parish Partnership Panel: 21 November 2024
 - 4] Standards Committee: 20 January 2025
 - 5] KALC: 12 December 2024
- b) New Requiring Attention:
The Police and Crime Commissioner Consultation on the New Priorities for Kent: Noted.

92/24] ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

Green Lane ownership and reporting of faults.
Risk assessment for Bonfire Night.

93/24] ANY CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

Nothing to consider.

94/24] DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING:

The next Parish Council Meeting is due to be held at 7.30pm in the village hall on Thursday 7 November 2024.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.42pm

Chairman

Date.....