

STANSTED PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 4 DECEMBER 2023
AT FAIRSEAT VILLAGE HALL AT 8PM**

PRESENT: Cllr Jack Saunders Chairman
Cllr Kelly Curtis
Cllr Peter Morris
Cllr Daren Sefer
Cllr Yvonne Tisson
Cllr Greg Whitaker

Mr David Rice Clerk
Four members of the public

Item *Action point*
Minute no

1 APOLOGIES

372 Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Brooker and were accepted.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

373 The Chairman noted his family relationship with the owners of the Stansted Lodge farm buildings.

3 NEW PARISH COUNCILLOR

374 Peter Morris was welcomed as a new Parish Councillor.

4 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6th NOVEMBER 2023

375 It was proposed by Cllr Saunders, seconded by Cllr Sefer that the minutes of the meeting held on 6th November 2023 be signed as a true record.

5 MATTERS ARISING

376 There were no matters arising.

6 COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

The Chairman suspended the meeting to allow TMBC Cllr Robin Betts and KCC Cllr Rayner to update the Parish Council.

Cllr Betts reported on the grants available for environmentally friendly projects: West Kent Rural Grants Scheme – Capital grants of up to £24,999 were available to rural businesses and community organisations.

Green Business Grant Scheme – will be opening up on 23 January 2024. One stream is focussed on supporting growth in businesses in the green sector (grants of up to £8,000), and the other on helping local businesses to reduce their carbon footprint (through building efficiency measures and has grants available of up to £5,000).

Shopfront & Vacant Unit Improvement Grant Scheme – will be opening on 8 January 2024. Capital grants of up to £5,000 are available to independent retailers or food and drink businesses looking to improve the energy efficiency of their shops.

During 2024 the Community Development Grant Scheme will open again with grants of up to £5,000 and details will be available from TMBC shortly.

The TWBC litter collection contract had been sub-contracted for a trial period to concentrate on the problem of fly-tipping.

A new Chief Executive officer of TMBC would be elected following the retirement of Julie Beilby.

Cllr Rayner noted that the move to the Agile software by TMBC for the planning process continued to present problems for the public when accessing applications and decisions and the whole system was subject to significant delays.

Cllr Rayner noted that KCC had brought a successful legal action against the Home Secretary regarding the treatment of unaccompanied asylum seekers. The increased numbers of immigrants had placed increased stress on the care system in Kent.

The financial pressures faced by Kent County Council were noted and it was likely that a section 114 notice would ensue in 2024, effectively placing it in administration.

KCC was required to provide transport for children requiring attendance at special needs schools and the cost of living crisis had pushed the expense of this service from £60m to £80m per annum.

The Chair thanked Cllrs Betts and Rayner and reconvened the meeting.

7 CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

377 It was agreed that the Chairman would compile the responses received from the other members of the Parish Council so that a final version could be prepared.

Chair

8 WAR MEMORIAL

378 The Parish Council discussed the damage to the war memorial and Harry Bott had been contacted to ascertain the material used in order that a suitable repair could be arranged but this had yet to be confirmed. It was agreed that Harry Bott should be contacted again to confirm the material so that a repair could be arranged and that the Clerk should check if there were any receipts available detailing the metal.

Clerk

9 MEMORIAL TO PILOT OFFICER COLIN FRANCIS

379 The position of the new memorial had been finalised and would be placed on the bank opposite the triangle. A date would be fixed in March 2024 for the vicar of St Mary's Church to dedicate the memorial and this would coincide with a fly-past to be arranged by the Shoreham Aircraft Museum.

10 HEARING LOOPS

380 The installation of hearing loops in both Stansted and Fairseat Village Halls had been arranged with installation taking place on 7 and 19 December.

11 ASH DIE-BACK & BROWN'S FIELD COPPICE

381 It was noted that the Clerk had sent an email to Mr Connell requesting the replacement of the oak tree which had been removed in error but that no response had been received to date.

12 HEDGE-CUTTING

382 It was noted that the hedge-cutting had been started and it would need to be completed by February 2024. The Chairman agreed to discuss with Cllr Brooker.

Chairman

13 MAINTENANCE OF LOCAL PATHS

383 There were no specific items discussed.

14 HIGHWAYS

Traffic Plan, Highway Improvement Plan, Signage

384 The Parish Council was still waiting for a response from Nigel Rowe from KCC Highways regarding the specific project requests and asked the Clerk to follow up.

Clerk

Other Highways issues

385 The project to site gates at the six entrances to the parish had stalled and needed to be continued with the aim of it being completed by the end of 2023. It was noted that permission for the gateway on the Vigo Road still required the Gilroys' permission.

386 The land designated as village green in Hatham Green Lane needed to be built up to form a bank to prevent parking and disturbance to the neighbouring properties. The quote from Cllr Brooker had been accepted but the work would not be started until the spring of 2024.

15 PLANNING

a Applications

387 As access to the Planning Application website was not open there was no detailed discussion on planning matters.

b Decisions

388 (i) There were no decisions for noting at the time of the meeting.

389 c **Appeals**
(i) There were no new appeals at the time of the meeting.

d **Enforcement**
390 (i) There were no enforcement updates at the time of the meeting.

e **Other Planning matters**
391 There were no other planning matters discussed at the time of the meeting.

16 **FINANCE – Appendix A**

392 **2024 Budget**
The Budget for 2024 was discussed and amendments suggested to the Clerk for a revised version to be circulated at the January 2024 meeting.

Clerk

393 a **Bank Balances**
The bank balances as listed on Appendix A and as shown on the bank statements were noted.

394 b **To approve payments made since last meeting**
Cllr Saunders proposed and Cllr Sefer seconded and it was agreed that the payments made since last meeting as Appendix A be approved.

395 c **Accounts for payment**
Cllr Saunders proposed and Cllr Sefer seconded and it was agreed that the accounts for payment listed on Appendix A be approved.

396 d **Bank mandate and signatories - dual authorisation**
The signatories would be updated and the dual authorisation arranged as soon as possible.

397 e **CCLA deposit fund**
Following the setting up of the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund account which was in progress, the Landlord's deposit monies would be moved to this account.

398 f. **Grange Park School – rent review**
It was noted that as a 'goodwill gesture' the rent would be kept at £55k per annum in exchange for removing the break clause. Solicitors would be instructed to prepare a variation to the existing lease.

399 g. **Other Finance issues**

It was noted that requests for grants from the Village Halls and St Mary's Churchyards would be reviewed upon receipt from the respective parties.

Clerk

17 MANAGEMENT OF PARISH COUNCIL LAND AND PROPERTY

400 i Recreation Field

There were no matters to note.

401 ii Play park

There were no matters to note.

402 iii Brown's Field

This item had been discussed under minutes 381.

403 iv Telephone box in Plaxdale Green Road

There were no matters to note.

404 v Maintenance and handyperson

There were no matters to discuss.

405 vi Other issues

There were no matters to discuss.

18 VILLAGE HALLS

Stansted Village Hall

406 i There were no issues to discuss.

Fairseat Village Hall

407 ii There were no issues to discuss.

19 WILDLIFE CAMERAS & SIGNS

408 It was noted that Cllr Brooker needed to provide a date for when this project could be completed.

20 REPORTS FROM MEETINGS ATTENDED BY THE COUNCILLORS/CLERK

409 There were no reports at this meeting.

21 CORRESPONDENCE

410 A request for a donation from the Beams charity was discussed and it was agreed for a payment of £150 to be made.

22 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were further items of business for discussion.

PUBLIC SESSION

No items were discussed.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 10.20 pm.

SignedChairman

Dated.....