

# Eastling Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Eastling Parish Council held remotely on Wednesday 27 May 2020 at 6.30pm

Present: Cllr Jimmy West (Chairman), Cllr Paul Ainsworth, Cllr Julia Bailey and Cllr John Payne; and Mrs Wendy Licence (Clerk).

Also present was County Councillor Andrew Bowles, Ward Member David Simmons and one member of the public.

## 1. Election of Chairman

Cllr Payne **PROPOSED** Cllr West for the office of Chairman; **SECONDED** by Cllr Bailey; **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**. Cllr West was duly elected Chairman and will sign his Declaration of Acceptance of Office at the next physical meeting of the Council.

## 2. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Cllr Paul Adams; apologies accepted.

## 3. Declarations of interest

None were declared.

## 4. Election of Representatives

To confirm - Representatives at KALC Swale Committee Meetings

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** for Cllr Adams and Cllr Bailey to be the representatives at KALC Swale Committee Meetings.

## 5. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting Held on 11 March 2020

Councillors considered the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 11 March 2020 and **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to accept them as a true record of the meeting. The minutes will be signed by Cllr West at the next physical meeting of the Council.

## 6. Matters Arising from the Minutes

### Newnham Lane petition

KCCllr Bowles reported that he had heard nothing since the last Swale Joint Transportation Board meeting. There is a current moratorium on issuing Traffic Regulation Orders. KCC officers are working from home and are on reduced hours. KCCllr Bowles said that he is now the Chairman of the Swale Joint Transportation Board.

The Clerk said that she had informed the resident that the petition had been submitted.

KCCllr Bowles said the next meeting is scheduled for 22 June although it is unclear as to whether it will go ahead or if the report has been written. Usually the meetings are organised and hosted by Swale Borough Council although Kent County Council might host the meeting. The issue is that the committee has members from Kent County Council, Swale Borough Council and Parish Councils and they are all using different remote meeting platforms.

SBCllr Simmons said that he was aware of the petition and will look out for it. The Borough Council might be changing from Skype which might help the committee meet.

### Z-bend

Cllr West said the drainage at the Z-bend has improved.

Cllr Payne reported that he had seen the drain being cleaned.

## 7. Public Time

No matters were raised.

## 8. Village Warden's Report

No report had been received from the Village Warden.

## 9. Website

Cllr Ainsworth informed Members that he had been updating the village website with information on COVID-19. There is a WhatsApp group for the community and also one for volunteers. People are supporting the vulnerable in the community. The community WhatsApp group is a good way for people to communicate in the community.

Cllr West thanked all those involved in the community WhatsApp group which is working well and there is a real community spirit. A support hub has also been organised.

Cllr Bailey said that when the lockdown began there were elderly volunteers in the village and there was an appeal for younger volunteers. People were organised into a support hub and the WhatsApp group created. Everyone is connected together.

Cllr Ainsworth said that not everyone is on the WhatsApp group but information is being passed on. This will probably continue after the COVID-19 pandemic. People are using Zoom and WhatsApp to keep connected which is good.

*ACTION: Cllr Ainsworth to put the contact details in the Good News magazine*

## 10. Chairman's Report

Cllr West reported that some pot holes have been repaired in the village and further information has been received regarding further work which has been scheduled. The road from Kettle Hill to Elverland Lane will be closed for seven days, it will affect residents as they park on the road and will have to move their cars.

KCCllr Bowles said residents will be given notice to move their cars.

Cllr West reported that landlord of The Carpenters Arms has been doing a brilliant job supplying food to the village and may set up a permanent shop in the barn.

Cllr West informed Members that the Secretary of State for Business, Environment and Industrial Strategy will make an announcement regarding the proposed Cleve Hill solar farm by the weekend.

## 11. Finance

### i. Finance Report

Cllr Payne informed Councillors that the first instalment of the Precept has been received and that there is £8,043 in the account. The only payment since the last meeting has been the Clerk's salary and expenses.

### ii. To consider invoices and cheques raised

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to pay Mr Paul Ainsworth £240.00 for the village website.

*Cllr Ainsworth did not take part in the discussion or vote on this matter.*

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to pay the KALC subscription of £202.34. Cllr West said membership is a valuable tool for the parish Council and it gives the Clerk access to legal advice.

### iii. To consider request from The British Red Cross for a grant

### iv. To consider request from Marie Curie for a grant

Councillors considered the request for grants from the national offices of the charities and were concerned about the lack of localisation and whether help was given locally. It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** not to contribute.

## 12. General Power of Competence

It was resolved that Eastling Parish Council, having met the conditions of eligibility as defined in the Localism Act 2011 and SI 965 The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence)

(Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012, adopts the General Power of Competence until the next relevant Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

### 13. Planning Matters

Cllr West reported that there had been no new planning applications and that the Parish Council always looks at all applications. The Parish Council represents the community it serves in Eastling and gives recommendations to Swale Borough Council which is the Planning Authority and makes the decision on each proposal.

### 14. Correspondence

1. 12.03.20- KCCllr Bowles: pothole data
2. 19.03.20- Helen Whately: MP Statement on Coronavirus
3. 20.03.20- SBC: change in opening hours
4. 23.03.20- KALC CEO bulletin
5. 27.03.20- SBC: details of emergency support service
6. 01.04.20- KCC: launch of the Kent Together Helpline
7. 03.04.20- KCCllr Bowles: pothole data
8. 14.04.20- KCCllr Bowles: annual report and March report
9. 22.04.20- KCCllr Bowles: Kent Highways and Transport update
10. 28.04.20- Message from Helen Whately MP
11. 28.04.20- KCC Household Waste Recycling Centres: waste briefing
12. 01.05.20- KALC Newsletter
13. 11.05.20- Kent County Council Mineral Sites Plan, Early Partial Review of the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013-30: Publication of Inspector's Report
14. 16.05.20- Kent Police Rural Task Force: Rural Crime report and Rural Matters publication
15. 20.05.20- KALC CEO bulletin
16. 27.05.20- KCC Highways update on temporary road closures in Swale.

### 15. Any Other Business

Cllr West thanked SBCllr Simmons for joining the meeting. SBCllr Simmons reported that Swale Borough Council continues to function. Currently a COVID-19 test centre has been set up in the car park at Swale House. Meetings are being conducted remotely. Grants are available for small businesses and the Village Hall Committee has received a grant of £10,000. Swale Borough Council was allocated £35,000,000 to distribute and has awarded grants of £24,000,000.

Cllr Ainsworth said the grant to the Village Hall will help offset the loss of income and any surplus will go towards refurbishment. The grant did not come with any conditions and it is a real help during this difficult time.

KCCllr Bowles said there is also a scheme for public houses and sports clubs as long as they have a building which is rated.

*ACTION: Cllr Ainsworth to add to the village website.*

KCCllr Bowles reported that Kent County Council is holding an increasing number of meetings remotely and the first planning meeting has been held online. It has taken some time to set this up as some Councillors only have iPads. It is hoped to run the existing calendar of meetings in July. The COVID-19 epidemic is extremely costly to Kent County Council and it has only been reimbursed 50% from Government. There is also an issue with the reduced collection rate of taxes and this will make the budget for 20-21 irrelevant. There has been a massive increase in unaccompanied minors entering the country through Kent and this has not been shared out among the shire counties as usual and the extra financial burden has decimated the budget. The County Council now has a duty to inspect care homes, the Council has the work but not the funding.

Cllr West thanked KCCllr Bowles for his report and for attending the meeting.

Cllr West thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

**Date of next meeting: Wednesday 22 July 2020**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.25pm

Signed as a true record of the meeting:

Chairman  
Date: 22 July 2020