



## ACOL PARISH COUNCIL

The Village Hall  
The Street  
Acol  
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### **Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 7.30pm, Acol Village Hall**

**Present:** Parish Councillors Richard Steel – Chairman [RS], Sarah Corby [SC], Gavin Winpenny [GW], Wendy Winpenny [WW]

**In Attendance:** Sara Archer – Clerk, District Cllr Abi Smith, PC Andy Howe plus 3 members of the public.

#### **1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED:** To approve the minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

These were proposed by Cllr Corby, seconded by Cllr W Winpenny, all were in agreement and therefore signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

#### **2. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Cllr Steel provided the following report summarising the Council's activities during the last year.

- New banking arrangements. Accounts transferred to Unity Trust online banking. Signatories and contact details updated accordingly.
- Policies & Procedures Updated.
- Civility & Respect Pledge adopted.
- Introduced a PC meeting Attendance Register.
- Introduced Councillor Lead Roles.
- Updated website. Average around 400 page views per month.
  - <https://www.facebook.com/Acol.Village> (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/acolkent> = villagers' discussion group).
- Switched to monthly report in Village Voice & online, instead of full minutes, although these are still available.
- Introduced Action Plan with targets and lead responsibilities.
- Registered with Information Commissioner's Office.
- Monthly Playground safety inspections.
- Introduced annual Freedom of Acol awards. A Working Group has been set up to discuss nominations, involving representatives from the community and Councillors.
- Greater focus on training/ capability.
- Dog control on Rec.
- Street lighting. Issues reported and being followed up with the relevant responsible companies.
- Parking. Issues noted and solutions being explored to ensure the least disruption for all residents.
- Thanet Area Committee (TAC).
  - Hope to achieve greater shared working/ less duplication of effort/ increased capacity and effectiveness.
- Highways.
  - Speedwatch. Volunteers welcome to join the team. Unable to justify Auto Speedwatch. All sessions logged on website for information.
  - 7.5 tonnes weight limit – Raised with KCC Highways Engagement Lead. Unable to use evidence from CCTV footage, writing to Neil Baker to appeal against this.
  - North Thanet Link Road; responded to consultation – awaiting further news.
  - Reduced speed limits – Added to Highways Improvement Plan. Supported by traffic data and Kent Police. Work to be completed in due course.
  - Litter. Some improvement – more street sweeping – Clerk attending regular meetings with TDC.
  - Quex Footpath. Inclement weather delayed the grass footpath being sewn, however, a 3m strip at the edge of the field has been left in preparation for the footpath.
- CCTV upgrade. Quote obtained to upgrade and relocate the equipment. Grant applied for. All Councillors will have remote access to view the footage as required.
- New bench for Rec. Grant received with thanks from KCC members Cllr Linda Wright and Cllr Derek Crow-Brown.
- Planters, village decoration.
- St. Mildred's Church. Noted that £1000 required to repair the porch roof.
- Telephone box.
  - BT – no knowledge of being previously adopted.
  - Not used for 2 years prior to June 2023, to be decommissioned in due course.
- Events. Support for the D-Day 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary welcomed. Looking into a 'Fish n Chip' Supper. Best dressed Village competition being run by TRRG.

- Neighbourhood Plan.
  - Survey analysis in progress. Update to be provided at next meeting.

### **3. FINANCE REPORT**

The Clerk presented the budget report and financial position for the last year. Payment for the removal of trees at the Recreation Ground and an increase in Sec 137 expenditure was noted. The accounts would be formally audited by the Internal Auditor – Tony Kilbee, and then brought to an extraordinary meeting to be approved by the Council. As income and expenditure are below the threshold of £25,000 they are declared as being exempt from external audit. All documents will be made available for public inspection and published on the website accordingly.

### **4. VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE REPORT**

Jon Inchley – Chairman, was unable to attend the meeting, however, he submitted the following report on behalf of the Village Hall Committee which was read by Cllr Steel:

We are pleased to report that the Village Hall diary is, once again, very well booked. Our funds do, of course, mostly depend on earnings from hiring.

The new event, introduced last year, the Children’s Party, was held again in December. It was a great success, and it is hoped that this will continue to be an annual event. Our thanks to Jessica Adams for undertaking the arranging.

The decision to extend the Adult Christmas Party to include younger villagers was intended to encourage additional support but regrettably, with only limited support, it was decided that the event be cancelled this year. It was not financially viable to continue.

The annual Reindeer Drive was held but it was disappointing to report the lack of attendance, particularly by children. This is always a very jolly event, and it is hoped it will continue. But like the Adult Party it is only with adequate support can these activities be held. However, an added event has been arranged by David Hayfield – a Social Evening – merely a meeting of friends to enjoy music and conversation.

There have been no major maintenance projects undertaken this year but the old outside bench was renovated and a plaque remembering the late Sam Hodgson was inserted. The exterior doors were re-stained and varnished.

The Committee funds are “healthy” but it is important to stress the need to not only hire the Hall but also to attempt to fund raise. We can only do this by holding events which we hope will be well attended. We would welcome suggestions from anyone.

The Management Committee would not be able to discharge its responsibilities half as well without the invaluable efforts of our Treasurer and Secretary, Iris Osborne. We are very much beholden to her, as she facilitates everything we do. We should also acknowledge the efforts of Sheila Bransfield our booking secretary and David Hayfield and Bill Yeoman, who willingly tackle the many tasks, large and small that ensure the Hall is maintained in good order and is prepared for key events during the year.

We are also grateful for the additional help that we have received on many occasions from other residents of the village. We are looking forward to another successful year in 2024 and we hope to continue with the support of all those who have joined in our events, but we also look forward to seeing new faces. We operate the Hall for the benefit of the village and hope that with the support of everyone our Hall will continue to be the hub of the village.

### **5. NURSERY FIELDS RESIDENTS’ ASSOCIATION REPORT**

Karen Ault advised the Nursery Fields Residents’ Association would be holding their AGM on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024. Items to be included on their agenda for consideration should be forwarded to Karen prior to the meeting.

### **6. ACOL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY REPORT**

No report received. It was noted that the monthly meetings were well attended, however, residents were encouraged to get involved and support the horticultural shows.

### **7. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

Members of the public were given the opportunity to make any comments or raise any concerns to be considered.

- The road structure and impact of the Link Road on the Village was discussed. Exact plans were yet to be finalised, and all information would be made available on the website to keep residents updated on any developments.

- Concern was raised regarding the parking issues experienced at Nursery Fields. The Management Committee would be discussing the problems at their AGM and exploring options to find a suitable solution to enable the parking to be managed effectively for everyone.

The meeting was closed by the chairman at 20:17hrs