

Ospringe Parish Council

The Parish Council meeting was held on Wednesday 7th February 2024 in the foyer of the Community Hall, Painters Forstal. Regarding COVID 19 precautions, face coverings were not worn at the meeting. A Risk Assessment had been carried out previously. The meeting commenced at 7.37 pm

Present:

A Keel – Chairman
A Bowles
R Simmons

Cllr T Thompson

K Lockwood – Clerk

Apologies:

B Flynn – abroad - approved
C Elworthy-abroad - approved
Cllr Rich Lehmann
PC Morris -email report noted by the PC

020/24 Dispensations

R Simmons, C Elworthy, B Flynn and the Chairman A Keel have been granted dispensations to deal with matters relating to the setting of the precept.

021/24 Covid 19 Restrictions

Although masks were not worn Councillors agreed that due to the confined space and the sizable group of attendees the entrance door should be opened periodically throughout the meeting to let fresh air circulate. Precautions would be reviewed on a month-by-month basis and continue to be set as an agenda item.

022/24 Public Participation

A group of residents were in attendance to address the PC about a number of concerns. The Chairman handed around a register for people to sign.

A member of the public said that they had had trouble accessing the meeting dates and various other documents on the website. The noticeboard at the church was not very accessible for many residents so a noticeboard in the village would be a better location. The Chairman stated that agendas and other public documents were on the website as a statutory requirement and requested that if there was a problem accessing the documents on the website then to contact the Clerk/Chairman. The Chairman would explore the possibility of acquiring a new noticeboard but it is not in this year's budget.

The Chair of PFCA had submitted further details of the two projects to the PC which the PC had previously agreed to consider making a grant towards. Quotes had been obtained by PFCA for the fencing for the pre-school play area. The Chair of PFCA stated that quotes had also been obtained for an extension to the car park. Both were beyond the current means of PFCA. However, both projects could be done at a good price working with volunteer labour.

The Chairman enquired as to the lifespan of the car park. The Chair of PFCA responded by saying that it would be similar to the materials in the existing car park, gravel and matting. It would last 10 years with good maintenance, maintenance days are planned. Similar examples elsewhere have lasted well.

Surplus funds from activities would be used for replacing the surface as and when required.

The Chairman asked when both projects were due to start. The Chair of PFC stated that the projects would last from the end of February through March.

The parish council resolved to make a grant of up to £2,000 for the fencing and up to £2,500 for the overspill car park projects.

A group of residents were in attendance to bring to the PC their concerns about the speed of vehicles using the lanes/roads in the parish.

One member of the public addressed the PC, stating that they wanted to help get engagement from different parts of the parish and help the PC see how dangerous the speeding vehicles and traffic situation was, citing a near miss with a car that had recently occurred. The resident is concerned about Swale BC's lack of a 5 year land supply, giving developers the opportunity to build more housing developments and increasing traffic levels further. They wanted to raise awareness of the situation and had engaged with Cllr T Thompson.

One resident from the Brogdale Road asked whether road calming measures could be put in place (slower speed signs, average speed cameras). Since the new housing estate had been built, they had noticed more vehicles speeding when they were out walking.

Cllr R Simmons noted that cars don't drive according to the conditions.

The Chair asked whether the resident had accessed the HIP on the website and encouraged all to view the HIP, which is a way that the PC can engage with KCC on measures that can put in place to make highway improvements. It has undergone several revisions since the PC produced the first draft approx. eight months ago, which the community had been invited to respond to. The Chair explained that the process required prioritisation of issues on the HIP document, it was not possible to deal with every issue. KCC have to take into account finance and resources. A main focus has been on Porters and Plumford Lanes as both lanes are used as rat runs when major roads are closed, and at other times are affected by usage by traffic unsuited to the lane by virtue of size. Excessive speed of vehicles using the lanes is also a problem. The Brogdale Road is also a high priority for the parish council and in particular the unrestricted stretch from the top of Whitehill to the bottom of Bay Hill where there have been numerous accidents. Following representations made by the parish council, KCC are looking at a 40 mph restriction but the PC are pushing for a 30 mph restriction. The PC are trying to persuade KHS that a statutory 30mph restriction is needed on that stretch. The PC has been pressing for statutory restrictions on Porters and Plumford Lanes and awaits an update from KHS on whether a statutory restriction on Porters and Plumford Lanes will be agreed and if so whether for weight or width. A statutory restriction can feed through to satnavs which show roads as unsuitable for certain usages, or do not include them when calculating routes.

An advisory "Unsuitable for HGVs" sign had been installed on Porters Lane and another would be installed on the other side of the junction so that traffic from both directions would see signage. This was also as a result of the HIP process.

KHS had not agreed to a request in the HIP for the kerb adjacent to the culvert along Abbotts Hill/Water Lane being painted white to alert drivers to the edge of the carriageway.

The PC had also set up SpeedWatch to help deter speeding vehicles and the results collated from the Speedwatch sessions provided valuable information on vehicle speeds at the monitored spots in the parish. It was noted that cars are often speeding from Eastling into the village as well as along Brogdale Road.

Another resident enquired about how SpeedWatch worked. The Chair explained that a group of volunteers led by Cllr C Elworthy carried out SpeedWatch sessions using a speed gun to monitor speeds on vehicles in locations in the parish. It is community-led but supported by the Police. If a vehicle goes

over a certain speed a letter is sent out from the Police.

A member of the public stated there had been a big difference from a year ago and thanked the PC.

The Chair thanked the residents for coming to express their concerns.

Cllr A Bowles stated that the HIP document was an organic document and that comments could be fed back to the PC.

The Secretary and the Walks leader of the Faversham Footpath Group addressed the PC. The Secretary had emailed the PC in January about a suggestion to create a footpath from the junction of Vicarage Lane/Whitehill to Lorenden Park entrance by means of a permissive path running along the edge of an orchard and Lorenden Park. This permissive path would help in linking up footpaths from Faversham town to Lorenden Park. KCC and the local landowner had been contacted by FFG as had Lorenden Trust. The group asked for the PC's support.

The Walks leader addressed the PC. Lorenden Park is a lovely place to visit and is well managed. When leading large groups of people, she found there is not enough room for people to wait off the road before going one by one through the main entrance gate into Lorenden Park. It is also difficult to keep to the edge of the road when walking along this stretch of road. A permitted footpath would encourage more people to walk.

The Chair asked if the group had spoken to Swale BC and Adrian Oliver. The group had contacted Mr Oliver and Cllr Rich Lehmann.

The Chair stated that the PC had previously spoken to Mr Berendt (consultant to Swale and Faversham Town Council) and Mr Oliver as part of the Active Travel Network initiative, and had suggested the possibility of a path adjacent to the road. The Chair stated that safe routes for pedestrians and cyclists are a good thing and one example was the request by the parish council for the upgrading of the footpath across Perry Court to a cycle route. The parish council would want to hear from the landowners as they would need to agree to the setting up of permissive paths over their land. The Chair asked the group to keep the PC updated and would reengage with Mr Oliver.

The Chair of PFCA stated that PFCA were supportive in encouraging walking and cycling to and from the Community Hall.

023/24 Signing of Minutes

All were in agreement for the Chairman to sign the Minutes as a true record of the business transacted at the Parish Council Meeting held on 3rd January 2024.

024/24 Matters arising

Commemorative Trees:- The trees had arrived. One had been donated to PFCA and 3 were to be planted shortly in Lorenden.

Dog Bins:-The Chairman had been chasing Swale BC about the promised new bin. A member of the public reported that a new bin had been placed at the gate at the entrance of Lorenden.

Highway Matters and road closures –The parish council noted that the Ashford Road would be closed next month (by BT) for one day. Numerous highway matters had been dealt with earlier in the meeting by the parish council during public participation.

Speed Watch: - A session would take place next week.

Lorry Watch:-No further news. Cllr R Simmons noted that there had been an increase in lorries in the parish.

Lighting: -Regarding the broken light on the Brogdale Road, the parish council had received a quote for a replacement but to ensure value for money the PC were investigating what another contractor would charge for carrying out repair work, and whether the other contractor would be worth swapping over to for the PC's lighting maintenance contract.

Playground: There are no further updates.

Churchman's Farm:- Alice Reeves has not yet been in contact with the Chairman.

Facebook page:-no further update.

Closure of Faversham Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC):- **Action: The Chairman intends to write to Helen Whately.** The PC notes that the centre is safe for the next financial year but beyond that the future is uncertain.

Allotments:- Some vacant plots are coming up. An allotment holder had reported some asbestos sheeting on their plot. The Chairman would investigate the report and if necessary, get it removed.

The Clerk had contacted BDW Homes about the fenced allotments and sports pitch at Perry Court but had yet to receive a reply. The PC discussed contacting the Faversham Town Clerk about the allotments and Graeme Tuff at Swale BC about the sports pitch.

Faversham Neighbourhood Plan Consultation:- No further updates.

025/24 Highway Improvement Plan (HIP)

This had been dealt with under public participation. Cllr R Simmons stated that the number of putative passing spaces shown on the map attached with the HIP was a concern.

026/24 D Day 80-6th June 2024

In conjunction with PFCa the schedule had been arranged for the evening. The event had been registered as an official D-Day celebration. Arrangements for the event are ongoing.

027/24 Norman's Wood

The solicitor had been instructed to start the legal process of purchasing the wood.

Belmont Estate:- The Chairman had been emailed by various residents about a fallen tree on the Stalisfield Road. The Chairman had attended a meeting with the Administrator at Belmont and some residents. Belmont had been willing to engage, acknowledging residents' concerns about trees falling on the highway and on to neighbours' properties, and explained the work that they do to manage the woodland areas of the estate. Kent Highways had previously looked at the roadside trees and had requested for work to be carried out which the Belmont Estate had done.. The PC would continue to monitor the situation.

028/24 Community Hall

This had been discussed under public participation. The PC were still investigating the rules around PCs reclaiming VAT on expenditure on the hall.

Litterpick:- The Chairman had advised Swale BC a date in March may be a possibility and had requested assistance with rubbish sacks and the uplifting of filled rubbish sacks after the event.

Salt Bins:-Cllr C Elworthy had received 1 tonne bag of salt. Hopefully the hard salt had been replaced/chipped out in the salt bins that had been reported to Swale BC. The PC notes that the Brogdale Road is no longer on the salt route. Salt had been put down as a one-off due to the accident and water leaks on the road. There had been 4 leaks between the top of Whitehill and Coldstream cottages. A resident had phoned South East Water about them.

029/24 Parish Councillor Vacancies

There are still councillor vacancies, and the Chairman reminded councillors to look out for suitable new recruits willing to demonstrate commitment.

030/24 Defibrillator

The parish council had resolved to purchase one at the last meeting and an application via the BHF would be made.

031/24 The Snowdrop Project

The PC would not participate this year but may seek further details and consider it maybe in the future.

032/24 Planning

Applications for consideration

24/500114/AGRIC Plumford Farm Plumford Lane Ospringe Kent ME13 0DS

Prior notification for the erection of a replacement building. For its prior approval to: - Siting, design and external appearance. We have no observations to note.

23/505784/FULL3 Parsonage Oast Painters Forstal Road Ospringe Faversham Kent ME13 0EW.

Conversion of an agricultural barn to a single dwellinghouse, erection of a front porch and a boundary wall with associated parking and landscaping. The location is outside the built boundary of the village and as such Policy ST3 of Swale's current Local Plan presumes heavily against development. We are mindful of the latitude afforded by Policy DM 3 which makes provision for the conversion of redundant agricultural buildings in certain conditions. One such condition is that it must be demonstrated that a commercial use is unviable. However the report by GWF did not in the council's view afford a proper test of the viability, as the property was only offered for let on a short term tenancy, rather than either a longer term lease or sale of freehold. Given the poor condition of the building and its agricultural use and lack of services, it is wholly to be expected that interest would be very limited in a short term let. This is shown in the comments from Interested Parties in the GEF report.

Even if the non-viability test were passed, this does not mean that planning permission automatically follows - it simply removes the heavy presumption against development. Assuming that the applicants can bring forward convincing and robust evidence that a commercial use is unviable, we would still have some concerns about the development proposals as submitted. These include the following (and are partly informed by the fact that the property is in the Kent Downs AONB ("National Landscape") where extra protection should be afforded):

1. The mass and height of the building which makes it very visible from the south and the east (albeit the latter is in the first instance across meadowland), and to a lesser extent from the north. As such, development as a dwelling will make it more rather than less prominent.
2. The Design and Access Statement and the Planning Statement and certain elements of the design do not make reference to the Ospringe Parish Design Statement.
3. The concerns of the neighbour that the heights and general position of the fenestration will lead to overlooking of their property. We would like these investigated further.
4. The metal frames of the windows are out of keeping with the frames of the fenestration of the other properties in the Parsonage Oast properties and previous planning policy has been to refuse consent for anything other than wooden framed windows.
5. The development proposes removal of the existing walls, cladding and roof leaving only the existing metal frame. This does not accord with the pre-app advice which stated that the development might be considered acceptable under Policy DM3 provided that it was capable of conversion "with only minor alterations".
6. The design with its extensive fenestration and doors is incongruous in its setting.
7. The proposals include the installation of a flue for a wood burning stove; we query whether a more environmentally friendly alternative could be used.
8. If permission were granted we would wish to see householder permitted development rights

removed, and a further prohibition on roof-mounted solar panels.

Planning applications pending:

23/505197/SUB Scotts Farm Barn Hansletts Lane Ospringe Kent ME13 ORW. Submission of details to discharge conditions 3 - External Joinery and 4 - External Finishing Materials, Subject to 23/502328/FULL.

22/505533/FULL Judds Folly Hotel London Road Ospringe Kent ME13 ORH. Erection of a new ground floor orangery and changes to fenestration. Erection of new mansard roofs to north/front elevation over the new function room and first and second storey extensions to the east wing of the hotel building to provide 9no. new hotel rooms. Creation of 12no. new parking spaces.

21/504695/FULL Syndale Park London Road Ospringe Faversham Kent. Erection of elderly persons care home.

22/504036/FULL Queen Court Barns Water Lane Ospringe Kent ME13 8UA. Erection of new barn development for 6no. dwellings, parking barns, cycle/bin storage, waste water pumping station, new vehicular and pedestrian access, reuse of Victorian outbuilding for storage, new permissive footpath link, hard and soft landscaping works, communal and community open space. Amended documents and change of description - 02.10.23

21/505759/SUB Queen Court Barns Water Lane Ospringe Kent ME13 8UA. Submission of details to discharge part conditions for condition 4 (details of the proposed Kent peg clay tiles and replacement weatherboarding in the proposed stain or paint finish), condition 5 (additional details of the specific cast iron rain water goods (and associated brackets), condition 7 (Construction details for Barn 2 and revised details Barn 1), condition 8 (Barn 2 - detailed repair and alterations specification and associated works programme) and condition 9 (Barn 1 - revised joinery details) in relation to Listed Building Consent 19/505890/LBC.

21/505767/SUB Queen Court Barns Water Lane Ospringe Kent ME13 8UA. Submission of details pursuant to condition 4 (details of both hard and soft landscape) and condition 14 (The bat tiles, bat loft and owl boxes) in relation to planning permission 19/505888/FULL

21/504297/SUB Queen Court Barns Water Lane Ospringe Kent ME13 8UA Submission of Details to Discharge Condition 3- Existing lean-tos, silo water and oil tanks shown to be demolished, Condition 4 - Samples, Condition 5 - Details of the specific cast iron rain water goods, Condition 6 - Details of glazing and rooflight and part discharge Condition 7 Key construction details - Wall insulation system and weatherboard, Eaves and roof insulation, Verge details, Ridge roof junction, hip roof junction, Floor and underfloor, Elevations detail and vertical plan section, Condition 8 - Detailed repair and alterations specification programme - SPAB Repointing Stone and brickwork, Repair of timber frames and roofs, Energy efficiency and historic buildings and Condition 9 - Plans (for Barn 1) subject to 19/505890/LBC.

22/500912/FULL The Meads Farm Elverland Lane Ospringe ME13 OSP Siting of 1no. mobile home for use by gypsy/traveller family (retrospective).

22/501848/FULL Highfield Faversham Ospringe ME13 OSF Erection of a detached garage with garden room and erection of a single storey side extension to existing barn (retrospective)

21/506547/SUB Perry Court Farm London Road Faversham ME13 8RY Submission of details pursuant to condition 20 (Archaeology) in relation to planning permission 15/504264/OUT.

21/504692/SUB Land At Perry Court London Road Faversham Kent ME13 8YA Submission of Details to Discharge Condition 16 - Ecological Enhancements subject to 17/506603/REM.

20/505877/OUT Brogdale Farm Brogdale Road Ospringe ME13 8XU Outline planning application for mixed-use development comprising a nursery school, holiday lets and workshop/business units

SBC decisions:

23/505438/TCA Sports and leisure Syndale Park London Road Ospringe Faversham ME13 0RH.
Conservation area notification to fell two Laurel Trees and Holly Trees. Permitted.

23/505582/SUB Queen Court Barns Water Lane Ospringe Kent ME13 8UA Proposal: Discharge of condition 3 of 21/503788/FULL Already decided. Permitted.

Planning Inspectorate appeals:

Appeal 23/500180/REF The Retreat Elverland Lane Ospringe Kent ME13 0SP. Retrospective Temporary change of use of the land for the stationing of two static mobiles and two touring caravans for Gypsy/Traveller occupation for single family for a period of three years. Creation of access track and associated hard and soft landscaping. Original ref 23/504136/FULL pins ref APP/V2255/W/23/3333589 – in process.

23/500143/ENF /21/500507/OPDEV Hill Top Farm Elverland Lane Ospringe Faversham Kent ME13 0SAppeal against Enforcement Notice - Without planning permission, the erection of a stables and kennel buildings, the erection of a timber framed kennel, the alteration of land levels and the stationing of a touring caravan. Pending. PINs ref APP/V2255/C/23/3327594.

Cllr T Thompson left the meeting 9.50 pm

033/24 Finance

Payments for Approval: -

OPC Current Account

Chq no 1632 To Mr C Elworthy for trees £265.91

Chq no 1633 To Streetlights Ltd 4th quarter maintenance contract £248.70

Chq no 1634 To Mr A Keel reimbursement of payment of solicitor's fees relating to the purchase of Norman's Wood £500.00

Chq no 1635 To Painters Forstal Community Association for use of foyer for February meeting £20.00

EDF bills: Direct debit £444.14 including VAT 1ST Oct 2023-31st December 2023

Direct debit to Hugofox Limited £11.99 for website service January.

Receipts: None to report

Payments for Approval:-

Allotment Account

No payments to report

Receipts: None to report

A Bank reconciliation as at 3rd January 2024 and budget monitoring document had been circulated by the Clerk before the meeting. The variances relating to the budget had been reported at the last meeting. The amendments to the 2024-25 budget agreed at the January meeting had been made to the budget and the document had been circulated.

034/24 Correspondence

The Clerk had circulated a list of correspondence.

035/24 Members' reports -There was none

036/24 Any other business- There was none

Meeting ended at 9.57pm

Next meeting: 6th March 2024 in the Church room, Ospringe Church