

ASH-CUM-RIDLEY PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 16 March 2023 at Hodsoil Street & Ridley Village Hall, Hodsoil Street, TN15 7LE commencing at 7:45pm

Present:

Cllr M Brown
Cllr Mrs Brammer
Cllr Mrs Clark
Cllr Mrs Clucas
Cllr Mrs Connell
Cllr F Cottee
Cllr S Fishenden
Cllr Mrs Hobbs (arrived 8pm)
Cllr Mrs Howie (arrived 7.52pm)
Cllr M Manley
Cllr V Ngwenya
Cllr P Nightingale

In attendance:

Alison de Jager – Parish Clerk
Cllr David Brazier – Kent County Council
Cllr Penny Cole – Sevenoaks District Council
Cllr Perry Cole – Sevenoaks District Council
Mr C Clark – New Ash Green Village Association.
1 Member of the Public

8596/23 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr I MacLeod (ill), Cllr S Glover (work) and Cllr Miss Sapiets (family commitment) Cllr Mrs Clucas PROPOSED that the apologies and reasons for absence are accepted. SECONDED: Cllr M Manley and AGREED. District Councillor Alan Pett also sent his apologies.

8597/23 Declarations of Interest

- a. Declarations of Interest – None.
- b. No changes to the Register of Interests. Members were reminded that any alteration or new interests must be registered with the Monitoring Officer within 28 days.

8598/23 Dispensations

None received.

8599/23 Minutes

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 16 February 2023 be approved and signed. PROPOSED Cllr M Manley SECONDED: Cllr S Fishenden and AGREED.

8600/23 Casual Vacancy

It was NOTED that following the resignation of Cllr J Scott, a casual vacancy has arisen. In accordance with **Section 89(3) of the Local Government Act 1972**, the vacancy will be filled at the next ordinary election of Councillors on 04 May 2023.

8601/23 Outside Representation

- a. Almshouses – Cllr Mrs Brammer advised that Cllr I MacLeod has agreed to fill the vacancy on the committee.

8602/23 Planning

- a. Applications
SE/22/03281: 21 Redhill Wood, New Ash Green, DA3 8QH – Two storey side extension and single storey rear extension, Cllr M Manley PROPOSED that the Parish Council does not object to this application as long as it does not conflict with local planning policy. SECONDED: Cllr Mrs Brammer and AGREED.
SE/23/00475: 133 Punch Croft, New Ash green, DA3 8HS – Demolition of bin store to be rebuilt as WC. Alteration to front entrance. Cllr I MacLeod sent the following recommendation to the Clerk. The Parish Council does not object to this application as long as it does not conflict with local planning policy. The same materials as those in the original structure should be used to retain the harmony of the outside appearance of the terrace, and the planting should be replaced. Cllr Mrs Clucas PROPOSED that this recommendation is accepted. SECONDED: Cllr F Cottee and AGREED.
- b. The decisions, as set out in Appendix A to Agenda A/03/23 were RECEIVED and NOTED.
- c. Appeals
None at time of Agenda.
- d. Enforcements
None at time of Agenda.
- e. The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee of 02 March 2023 were NOTED.

8603/23 New Ash Green Shopping Centre

- a. As previously agreed, the Village Association has sent a letter to the new owners. Cllrs S Fishenden and Mrs Clucas attended a meeting in the Village Hall to determine the what residents would like to see in the shopping centre. It was felt that this meeting was premature and some suggestions made were regarding policing and public transport, which are not in the control of the owners.

8604/23 Finance

- a. The current financial position and accompanying reports were NOTED. Cllr V Ngwenya reported that General Reserves remain healthy with just under 5 months running costs. The Finance Committee agreed to purchase new equipment to help with the wi-fi in the Sports Centre building and alternative providers are being looked at for the telephone provision. The commemorative coins for the coronation of King Charles have been ordered. It was noted that payments for the hire of school facilities will be paid to Vivify Venues Ltd. The Sports Centre's general reserves are slightly above one times monthly running costs. Income continues to be below budget. The revised prices will come into effect on 1 April 2023.
- b. The cheques signed since the last meeting were authorised. PROPOSED: Cllr Mrs Brammer SECONDED: Cllr S Fishenden and AGREED.
- c. The minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee held on 21 February 2023 were NOTED.
- d. Due to a reduction in size of the new development at Netherfield, Sevenoaks District Council have requested a refund of CIL money in the amount of £1,383.06. Fortunately this money has not been spent and can be refunded.

The Clerk will write to Sevenoaks to ask what provisions can be put in place to prevent this happening again.

8605/23 Sports Centre

- a. The minutes of the meeting of the Sports Centre Management Committee held on 28 February 2023 were NOTED.
- b. The notes of the Sports Centre Working Party of 28 February 2023 were NOTED.
- c. Cllr M Manley reported that February continued to see good use of the Sports Centre with 450 more visits than this time last year. The class timetable remains well attended with the exception of a couple of the evening classes. Members have been informed about the price increase from 01 April 2023. There has been a mixed response with most negative feedback from Quiet time members as this membership is being withdrawn. New software is being set up and staff will be trained. Microfibre cloths have been introduced to the gym to reduce costs and help the environment. All staff have agreed to share the cleaning of the cloths. Plastic cups will be withdrawn in the future, encouraging members to bring their own water bottles. The Clerk and Assistant Clerk attended Hartley Parish Council meeting to support a request for a grant for the Sports Centre. Hartley Parish Council have awarded a grant of £4,000.00. Cllr M Manley thanked Hartley Parish Council for this contribution.

8606/23 Barnfield Park

- a. It was NOTED that the Liaison Group meetings had reduced from 4 a year to 2, and now no updates are received.

8607/23 Northfield

- a. It was NOTED that the date for the next meeting of the Northfield Management Committee will be held on 27 March 2023.

8608/23 Burial Ground

- a. It was NOTED that the date of the next meeting of the Burial Ground Committee will be held on 18 April 2023.

8609/23 Youth

- a. KCC Youth Workers continue with detached work once a week in New Ash Green.

8610/23 Climate Change

- a. The notes of the Climate Change Working Party held on 27 February 2023 were NOTED.

8611/23 New Ash Green Village Association

- a. No report.

8612/23 Highways

- a. Cllr S Fishenden PROPOSED that the Parish Council produces a Highways Improvement Plan which will consist of local concerns and suggested improvements as well as priorities for the Parish. Cllr S Fishenden will put this together liaising with Cllr F Cottee and Cllr M Howie regarding the rural areas. SECONDED: Cllr F Cottee and AGREED.

The meeting was suspended at 8.18pm to receive reports from the Village Association, County and District Councillors

The reports from the District Councillors are attached to these minutes.

The meeting reconvened at 8.38pm

8613/23 Health

- a. There was a well being event in the village with a health bus providing free blood tests, blood pressure etc, the instructor from the Sports Centre attended and provided taster classes of seated Zumba.

8614/23 Footpaths

- a. No report.

8615/23 Transport

- a. It was NOTED that the meeting with KCC, Arriva and Parish Councils to be held on 14 March 2023 was cancelled and these meetings have ended Both KCC and Arriva will be available to answer any queries.

The meeting was suspended at 8.41pm to allow Sevenoaks District Councillor Perry Cole to update the Parish Council on the following topic.

- b. Community Transport – Cllr P Cole advised that the grant application had not been successful, but this was expected due to the short time to prepare and submit a bid. A sub-group with members from each parish will be set up to continue the vision of running a service with volunteers.

The meeting reconvened at 8.44pm

8616/23 New Ash Green Focus Group and Police

- a. It was NOTED that the next meeting of the Focus Group will be held on 17 April 2023.

8617/23 Ash, Hodsoll Street and Ridley

- a. Ash – The March film is Empire of Light and the Banshees of Insherin will be shown in April 2023.
- b. Hodsoll Street – There is no update on the Green Man Pub. The Big Breakfast continues and a wine quiz has been arranged. There is a new electronic booking system for the village hall. The hall is heavily used, but will give up times for the Parish Council meetings.
- c. Ridley – a suggestion for the wording for a plaque on the bench at Ridley will be discussed with Mr Stroud's family.

8618/23 The Bulletin and Parish Website

- a. The Bulletin – it was noted that the next edition will be published in June 2023.
- b. Website – no report.

8619/23 Thursday Lunch Provision

- a. Lunch was cancelled this week. The price of the lunch will increase to £7.00 from 01 April 2023.

8620/23 KALC

- a. No report.

8621/23 Reports, Circulars and Correspondence

The reports, circulars and correspondence as set out in A/03/23 were NOTED.

Closed session
Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that due to the confidential nature of the next item, the public and press were asked to leave the meeting

8622/23 Personnel Committee Meeting

- a. The minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on 02 March 2023 were NOTED.
- b. The recommendations from the Personnel Committee were considered:
 - i. The consideration of the draft Home Working Policy, Lone Working Policy and Work Experience Policy will be deferred to the April 2023 meeting.
 - ii. Cllr S Fishenden PROPOSED that opening hours for members of the public are introduced of 9am – 12 noon, Monday to Thursday and Councillors to pre-book an appointment with the Clerk if they wish to visit the office. SECONDED: Cllr M Manley and AGREED.
 - iii. Staffing Review – Cllr Mrs Brammer PROPOSED that the recommendation to employ the services of a Local Government company to establish an evidence-based staffing review for the Parish Council. SECONDED: Cllr F Cottee and AGREED.
 - iv. Cllr S Fishenden PROPOSED that the Parish Council pays for reception cover for two shifts a week for a nine week period, when the situation will be reviewed. SECONDED: Cllr M Manley and AGREED.
 - v. Cllr S Fishenden PROPOSED that, it is delegated to the Clerk in consultation with Cllr S Fishenden to review the committee structure and prepare proposals for the Annual Parish Council meeting. SECONDED: Cllr Mrs Brammer and AGREED.

The meeting closed at 9.27pm

Signed:
Chairman

Date: