

Minutes of The Full Council Meeting held at The Rackliff Centre on

Monday 12th July 2021 at 7.30 pm

Members Present:

Cllr Liz Ellicott, Chair (LE), Cllr B Edwards, Vice-Chairman (BE), Cllr A Britcher – Allan (ABA), Cllr D Smith (DS), Cllr M O’Callaghan (MO) Cllr A Taylor (AT) and Cllr P Gripper (PG)

Officers Present:

Mrs S Denne (SD) and Mr K Watson (KW)

In Attendance:

None

Members of the Public:

Two

1. Enquire whether anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting
No-one present intended to film, photograph and/or record the meeting.

2. To receive and approve apologies for absence
Kent County Cllr J McInroy and Cllr C Ducklin

3. Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests
Cllr D Smith with regards Agenda item 14

4. Declarations of Lobbying
None

5. Minutes of the meeting held on 14th June 2021

These were agreed, and it was **RESOLVED** that the Chairman signed them as a true record

5.1 Matters outstanding from these minutes (not listed as separate agenda items):

Cllr Britcher-Allan provided an update on our request with KCC to install a mirror on a lamppost in Lower Green Road, opposite the junction with Ashley Park. KCC will not install a mirror as the junction is not deemed dangerous enough despite the number of near misses evidenced by residents. **Action:** KW is to request KCC weight load test the lamppost in order that we may progress installation of the mirror ourselves.

Cllr Britcher-Allan confirmed the missing bench at the top of Meadow Road will be reinstated on the opposite side of the road and an additional bench will be installed by TWBC next to the existing one in the High Street bordering the United Reform Church.

Cllr Britcher-Allan is meeting Steve Baughen, Head of TWBC Planning on Thursday 15th July 2021 to discuss the benefits of a Neighbourhood Plan. **Action:** ABA to provide an update at the next Full Council Meeting.

Officer Watson confirmed there have been no response to the Rusthall Life article requesting young generation volunteers join our new Environment Committee. Ms J Blackburn, former Chair and Rusthall resident restated her desire to join the Committee.

Cllr Ellicott confirmed the Chilston Clinic sign on Rusthall Road has been removed following objections raised with TWBC by the Tunbridge Wells and Rusthall Common Conservators. Cllr Edwards expressed his disappointment at receiving no vote of thanks for his 5 years' service as previous Chairman. Cllr Ellicott apologised, and on behalf of the Parish Council, thanked him for his loyal service and his willingness to remain as Vice-Chairman. The apology was accepted by Cllr Edwards.

5.2 Matters outstanding from previous minutes:

Officer Watson reminded all Cllrs he still requires their confirmation they have business travel cover with their motor vehicle insurance, where applicable, and thanked those who have already responded. Cllr Taylor advised it had cost £21 to add this cover to her insurance and it was subsequently approved the Council would cover the cost, subject to documentary evidence being provided. **Action:** KW follow up with missing responders.

Cllr Ellicott requested an update on Grange Road tenants of Town & Country Housing being charged additional rent for the maintenance of the land which runs down to Grange Road. Cllr Britcher-Allan apologised for the delay in providing an update. **Action:** ABA to provide an update at the next Full Council Meeting.

6. Open session for questions from the public:

Ms Blackburn advised the resident who arranged with TWBC for the bench to be removed from her boundary is now complaining about vehicles legally parking in the same spot. Mrs H Foster reported on a couple of local KCC pavement repairs where the contractors had made no provision for alternative pedestrian access. Cllr Britcher-Allan had already raised this issue via TWBC Cllr McInroy and received a subsequent apology from KCC. Mrs Foster went on to advise the burning of waste materials in bonfires near her premises has become unacceptable again. Cllr Ellicott signposted Mrs Foster to TWBC Environmental Health should the situation continue.

7. Session for County and Borough Councillors on matters concerning the Parish

Officer Watson read out the following report from Cllr McInroy: "Cllr Alex Britcher-Allan approached me about a couple of Highways matters. One was a blocked drain outside 82 Erskine Park. I advised that the Kent Highways Fault Reporting system be used for this, as the system is ideal for all types of Highways repairs and maintenance work. The link is as follows: <https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem>.

The other matter was to report a safety issue with works to a new footway surface being laid on Rusthall Road, between Bretland Road and Lower Green Road, by KCC RAFAT (Road And Footway Asset Team). The District Manager was contacting the Project Manager to investigate and report back to us, as it has been reported that the works were causing danger to members of the public, having to walk on the road without barriers or signage.

Health

On health matters, I should like to provide a word of caution. Whilst it is good news that the Government has today announced it is planning to lift most Covid rules next Monday, the number of cases of Covid is rising very fast, especially among those younger and not fully vaccinated cohorts. Last week, the number of cases in England grew by 59%, and in the South East by 74%. Rates grew rapidly across all of Kent's Districts and in Tunbridge Wells by 111%, with 202 per 100,000 of the Borough's population confirmed to be affected (96 per 100,000 in the prior week). As we are currently experiencing a third wave, care is still required to avoid infection and spreading the disease."

Cllr Britcher-Allan advised she is taking forward a complaint from residents regarding over hanging trees owned by Bet Fred at the top of Meadow Road. She is also discussing with the Common Conservators the potential danger to hedgehogs caused by the number of times the land is being cut. Cllr Britcher-Allan confirmed the Rusthall Community Larder continues to be very popular but will close at 2pm going forward as by then the food has normally run out and there are very few, if any, public still present.

8. Southwood Road Rec

- i. Officer Watson confirmed our joint objections with Speldhurst Parish Council to the Local Plan have been submitted by Alison Eardley, Planning Consultant.
- ii. Approval was received to decline the offer by Team Rubicon to run training sessions costing £800 at the skateboard park at Southwood Road Rec.

9. Common Conservators – Cllr Ellicott

- i. The archaeological dig on Rusthall Common adjacent to Langton Road is to continue for another two seasons (this summer and next summer). The accessible path between St. Paul's Church and The Beacon has stalled as The National Lottery have changed their mind regarding allocating funds which could potentially benefit the current landowners, Target Hollow. The Conservators are launching a Commemorative Bench scheme. The Friends of the Common are sponsoring four sessions of Wild Child between 11th - 12th September 2021. They have also approved the Rusthall Bonfire for this year.
- ii. There have been several donation requests received for replacing the WWI commemorative dead rowan tree. Cllr Ellicott confirmed again that the Parish Council have already committed to provide the replacement. **Action:** LE to talk to the other potential donators and agree what is best when the new tree is planted in November.

10. Allotments, Environment and Highways & Transport Committee proposal – Officer Watson

The Agenda item was withdrawn by Officer Watson.

11. Bob Doe Memorial Plaque – Cllr Edwards

Cllr Edwards advised three quotes had been received and it was approved he progress with the £411 option. The plaque will be the same size as the example fixed to the house in Manor Road but with Rusthall green as the background. The words have been provided by the family of the late Mr Doe. Cllr Edwards is seeking permission from the new house owners to affix the plaque and the ceremony is planned for Wednesday 15th September 2021 as this is Battle of Britain Day. **Action:** BE to provide an update at the next Full Council Meeting. KW to include an article in the September Rusthall Life magazine.

12. Chair's Report

Cllr Ellicott attended the latest Common Conservators Committee Meeting and updates were provided under Agenda item 9. Cllr Ellicott, on behalf of the Parish Council, expressed her thanks and gratitude to Officer Denne for her hard and dedicated work as Clerk during the last nine years and wished her the very best for her retirement post 31st July 2021.

13. Salomons Road – Cllr Edwards

Copies of the deeds and relevant covenants have been sent to solicitors for their comments. There are no fees payable, to date. Cllr Britcher-Allan requested details of the land size and the size of The Rackliff Centre for commercial valuation purposes. **Action:** KW to provide size estimates to ABA in due course.

14. Shirley Gardens additional road signage – Cllr Smith

Cllr Smith provided an update on the issues faced by residents of the Shirley Gardens cul-de-sac covering houses 2 – 6a. Complaints have been regularly received due to incorrect satellite navigation directing delivery drivers to these houses when, in fact, they should be delivering to 2 – 6 Shirley Grove. **Action:** KW to explore additional road signage for the cul-de-sac with KCC.

15. Queen’s Platinum Jubilee 2022

Officer Watson provided the background to the extended Bank Holiday due next year which will run from Thursday 2nd – Friday 3rd June 2022 i.e. the late May Bank Holiday will be moved to these dates. A briefing pack has been received from KALC. It was approved an initial discussion will be conducted at the Operation London Bridge Working Group on Tuesday 13th July 2021.

16. Officers Report

- i. Officer Watson confirmed there have been six applicants and Cllrs Ellicott, Edwards and Britcher-Allan will form the Interview Panel. The three Cllrs are meeting later in the week to agree which candidates should be invited for interview. Following a proposal by Officer Denne two Cllrs will call for an Extraordinary Meeting in August to formally appoint the successful candidate. **Action:** KW to monitor position.
- ii. Officer Watson advised there have been three enquiries regarding the cleaning job vacancy for The Rackliff Centre with interviews scheduled during the next couple of weeks. **Action:** KW to provide an update at the next Full Council Meeting.
- iii. Officer Watson provided an update on the fallen tree at Fremlins Close pond and the damage it had caused to a fence panel. The large oak tree has fallen into Nellington Court Retirement Housing, owned by Town & Country Housing, causing some damage to a couple of their trees. There is very limited risk to life as the destruction is well away from the retirement flats and the path which services access to the area has previously been blocked off by Town & County Housing. Living Forest are due to accompany Officer Watson to the site later in the week and he has already advised Town & Country Housing of the issue. **Action:** KW to provide an update at the next Full Council Meeting.
- iv. Officer Watson has initiated the 2021 Tree Inspection with Living Forest. Officer Denne explained this was cancelled last year due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- v. Officer Watson provided an update on anti-social behaviour, particularly the graffiti, and alleged drug dealing in Rusthall. All matters have been escalated to our PCSO J Burt.
- vi. Following a proposal by Officer Watson it was approved a new Staffing Committee will be formed to monitor and appraise the Clerk. The Clerk will be responsible for line management of the new Deputy Clerk. The Clerk will meet every four months with the Chair with the December meeting being the Annual Appraisal. **Action:** KW to source draft appraisal documentation for subsequent agreement with the Chair.
- vii. The Document Retention Policy proposed by Officer Watson was approved. **Action:** KW to publish full details on our web site and instigate any changes required to our Standing Orders and Policy and Procedures, as required.

17. Finance

- i. It was approved to open a new Hampshire Trust Bank 45 Days’ Notice Account with an initial deposit of £60,000. **Action:** KW agree four Parish Council nominated officers, including the Clerk, with the Chair and open the account.
- ii. £350 GDPR annual audit fee was approved.
- iii. £1272 costs for replacement of The Rackliff Centre noticeboard was approved.
- iv. £35 x three costs were approved for new signs at our allotment sites.

v. As our annual credit turnover through Unity Trust Bank now exceeds £100,000 (but less than £2M), a monthly bank account charge of £6 per plus 15p charge for each debit and credit transaction was approved.

18. Diary Dates (all to be held at The Rackliff Centre unless otherwise stated)

13th July 2021 730pm Operation London Bridge Working Group

19th July 2021 7pm Planning Committee

19th July 2021 730pm Highways and Transport Committee

21st July 2021 730pm Finance Committee

19. Accounts for Payment – to authorise the payment of invoices as listed (to follow)

Approved.

20. Items for Information

Cllr Butcher-Allan has chased TWBC with regards the MUGA at the top of Edward Street due to its state of disrepair. **Action:** ABA to provide an update at the next Full Council Meeting.

Date of Next Meeting – Monday 13th September 2021 730pm

The meeting closed at 915pm

g Allicott

Chairman

Dated *13th September 2021*

ACCOUNT PAYMENTS

DATE	NAME	DETAILS	DEBIT	CREDIT
09-Jul-21	B/P to: SLCC ENTERPRISES L	Training	98	
09-Jul-21	Direct Debit (NFST)	Pension	-99.66	
02-Jul-21	B/P to: Simply Shredding	Shredding	-158	
02-Jul-21	Direct Debit (FF) LIMITED	Mobile Phones	-47.64	
01-Jul-21	S/O to: Microshade Bus Co/ly	Computer Hosting	-154.98	
30-Jun-21	Service Charge	Bank Charges	-18	
30-Jun-21	B/P to: Horizon Telecom Lt.	Faxline	-1,734.90	
30-Jun-21	B/P to: Viking 2	Stationery	-67.04	
30-Jun-21	B/P to: K. Watson	JUNE SALARY ADJ.	-573.88	
30-Jun-21	B/P to: HMRC GUMBERNAULD	HMRC	-115.09	
30-Jun-21	B/P to: KADC	Training	-120	
30-Jun-21	B/P to: GDPR INFO LTD	GDPR Officer	-420	
30-Jun-21	B/P to: S. Osborne	Key Lock	-52	
28-Jun-21	S/O to: S.J DENNE	SALARY 2020 2021	-1,390.16	
28-Jun-21	S/O to: KJ & CR Walsun	SALARY RPC	-571.74	
28-Jun-21	S/O to: Capel Groundcare	Grass Cutting	-894.24	
28-Jun-21	Direct Debit (SCOTHYDRO.ELEG GAS)	Utilities	-108.81	
24-Jun-21	H Clearwin	Rent		44.38
23-Jun-21	B/P to: Castle Water	Water	-282.35	
23-Jun-21	B/P to: KADC	Training	-60	
23-Jun-21	Direct Debit (BT GROUP PLC)	Telephone & Broadband	-65.54	
21-Jun-21	B/P to: Quality Sussex Pla	Plants	-430	
21-Jun-21	GTW	Maintenance	-46.52	
21-Jun-21	B/P to: Capel Groundcare	Grass Cutting	-894.24	
21-Jun-21	B/P to: The National Allot	Subscription	-66	
17-Jun-21	Direct Debit (BUSINESS STREAM BA)	Water	-8.68	
16-Jun-21	Direct Debit (MLOYDS BANK PLC)	Fridge for Larder	-186.99	
15-Jun-21	PIA TRADING LTD	Shredding refund		150
14-Jun-21	B/P to: HMRC GUMBERNAULD	HMRC	-456.31	
14-Jun-21	B/P to: K. Watson	MAY ADJ SALARY	-303.54	
14-Jun-21	B/P to: S.J Denne	SALARY ADJ MAY	-32.12	
14-Jun-21	B/P to: Riabas	Computer Hosting	-128.38	
14-Jun-21	B/P to: KCC	Licence for Hanging Baskets	90	
14-Jun-21	B/P to: Langton Life Ltd	Magazine	-90	
	TOTAL		-9443.4	194.38