

POSTLING PARISH COUNCIL

postlingpc@aol.co.uk | www.postlingpc.co.uk

Minutes of Postling Parish Council meeting held at Postling Village Hall on Tuesday 30 January 2024 at 6.30pm

1. Attending: Chairman Frank Hobbs, Cllrs Helen Calderbank, Christine Hobbs, Rob Lye, John Pattrick, Daniel Shaddick, Parish Clerk Clare Hamilton, County Cllr Susan Carey.
Apologies: District Cllr Jenny Hollingsbee, District Cllr Elaine Martin.
2. **It was resolved** unanimously to accept the Minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2023.
3. There were no Members' declarations of interest on Agenda items.
4. Public Participation session not required,
5. There were no matters arising not included on the Agenda.
6. Planning Applications received and circulated to Councillors for comments, outcomes of those deliberations, and to consider any applications received since this agenda was published:
 - a. **23/0580/FH Pent Farm, Pilgrims Way CT21 4EY**
Photovoltaic solar array, ancillary infrastructure, and landscaping.
A public meeting was held on Tuesday 30 May at 6.30pm at Postling Village Hall to hear residents' views on this application.
PPC Objection. Still under consultation, awaiting F&HDC decision.
 - b. **19/1258/FH Postling Lodge, Farthing Common CT18 8DQ**
Retrospective planning permission for a grounds maintenance building and entrance gate accessed from Loughborough Lane at Postling Lodge.
PPC Objection.
A response has finally been received from F&HDC Development & Enforcement Manager stating (in summary) that following their investigation *"the development here is either now lawful through the passage of time, or amounted to permitted development in the first instance."*
Councillors thank Cllr Jenny Hollingsbee for her help in gaining a response after all this time and will write to the Chief Executive of F&HDC to complain about the timescale for this application especially as the pillars would have needed planning permission, but due to the time lapsed, are now permitted. Lengthy delays undermine the parish council's role in commenting on planning matters on behalf of parishioners.
 - c. No other planning matters.
7. Highways
 - a. Pot holes on Cuckoo Lane: some patching work has been done, more work will be carried out in the new financial year
 - b. Sandling Road: Repair work to erosion by badgers completed on 19 January
 - c. Sandling Road: Carriageway repairs between Staple Lane and Ashford Road scheduled for 26 January did not take place. Work has been re-scheduled for 1 February.

Chairman Frank Hobbs

Parish Clerk/RFO Clare Hamilton | 14a Elmstead Place, Folkestone CT20 1QU | 01303 257321 / 07890 248601

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8. Finance

a. Balance of account at 30 January 2024: £5,315.24

b. Payments and Receipts since last meeting:

Payments:

29.11.23	C Hamilton	Salary Oct Nov	430.56
29.11.23	C Hamilton	Backpay 1 Apr-30Sept	104.00
29.11.23	C Hamilton	Travel exp Nov meeting	7.20
03.12.23	HSBC	bank charges Nov	8.00
04.12.23	HugoFox	Go Cardless - web hosting	11.99
02.01.24	HSBC	bank charges Dec	8.00
03.01.24	HugoFox	Go Cardless - web hosting	11.99

Receipts:

Cheque received for Village Hall lease	50.00
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c. Expenditure due before next meeting:

C Hamilton	Salary Dec Jan	430.56	
C Hamilton	Travel exp Jan meeting	7.20	
HSBC	Bank charges Jan Feb	18.00	
HugoFox	Website hosting Jan Feb	23.98	vat £4.00
123reg	Annual domain name renewal	11.99	vat £2.30
Hopkins AED	Defibrillator service	114.00	vat £19.00
	Battery approx.	60.00	+vat (expires 2024)
	Electrode pads approx.	52.00	+vat (expires March 24)

It was resolved to approve expenditure. Proposed Cllr Christine Hobbs, seconded Cllr Helen Calderbank, all in favour, approved by the Chairman.

d. Precept request 2024/25 of £4,236.00 applied for to F&HDC.

9. Reports from District and County Councillors - see Appendix

The reported delay in securing a new strategic partner for Otterpool Park was discussed. There are concerns this may open up planning applications elsewhere before a new partner is found.

10. Vacancy for a Parish Councillor

Following the retirement of Charlie Wilkins, the councillor vacancy was advertised 10 January. No applications were received by the deadline for applications of 26 January.

11. Defibrillator

It was resolved to include infant electrodes when the defibrillator service takes place and the nursery school has agreed to pay for the infant electrodes.

Hopkins AED to contact Cllr Christine Hobbs in February to arrange defibrillator service date.

12. For Information

- Otterpool Park Working Group: At the last working group meeting it was understood that Otterpool Park PLC was in talks with a new strategic partner. At the subsequent joint parishes' meeting it was announced the potential partner was no longer interested. The Working Group is due to meet with Otterpool Park PLC Managing Director Gary Ridgwell on 1 February.
- KALC Community Awards Scheme 2024: no nominations this year.
- Website analytics: Nov: 87 visitors, Dec: 81 visitors, Jan: 60 visitors.
- Drainage issues: Flowing water causes problems on the highway, especially in icy weather. As the drainage issues are on private land, the council will write to the owner to enquire if the situation can be rectified.
- Meeting dates 2024: 26 March, 28 May (Annual Meetings), 30 July, 24 September, 26 November.

Meeting closed at 7.30pm.

Signed..... Cllr Frank Hobbs, Chairman, 26 March 2024

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Appendix Reports from District and County Councillors

District Councillor Jenny Hollingsbee

Budget - Work has continued on the 24/25 budget which will be voted on by the full Council on 18th February 2024. Whilst the District Council was left in a good financial situation when the new administration took over in May, inflationary pressures have put all Councils under financial pressure which will require increases to Council tax and fees broadly in line with inflation plus some cuts to non statutory services. Whilst I accept and support the need for some increases I am personally opposed to proposals to cut back on street cleansing and reduction in waste bins around the District as I feel these will ultimately lead to additional costs in dealing with fly tipping and a general deterioration on the appearance of the District which was one of the top objectives of the previous administration. There is also a proposal to reduce the number of rural verge cuts from two to one during the year and there is no provision to replace the current Hythe Swimming Pool which is coming towards the end of its life.

Constitution – The Leader of the Council put forward a motion to the full Council on 24 January 2023 to delay the implementation of the Committee system until May 2025. This was agreed and means that the Cabinet system of governance will continue for the next year.

Scrutiny Programme 2024/2025 – There is an opportunity to put forward topics to be included in the Scrutiny programme for discussion and debate. The deadline for submitting ideas is 5 February 2024. For further details [Discussing the things important to you | Folkestone & Hythe District Council \(folkestone-hythe.gov.uk\)](#)

Otterpool Park PLC – there has been no update on a strategic partner over the Christmas and New Year period.

Contact jennyhollingsbee@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk Mobile 07887918458

District Councillor Elaine Martin

Otterpool Park is progressing well. The new Managing Director, Gary Ridgwell, has restructured the team and is making good progress in remodeling and programming the development. F&HDC and Otterpool Park LLP have been greatly encouraged by the interest taken in the scheme by Homes England. Regular talks are now taking place with this Government agency. Prior to Christmas we received the good news from SE Rail that Westenhanger Station would become a stop on the high speed route.

At last week's Full Council meeting the introduction of a 'second homes tax' in Folkestone & Hythe was reaffirmed. Under new legislation passed by central government, local authorities will be able to charge those who own properties that are only "occupied periodically" extra. It also agreed to adopt amendments to the Council Tax on empty homes premiums from 2024/25 to apply to homes empty for 1 year now instead of 2 years.

The KCC consultation on the fate of the 8 Windmills in their ownership has closed and we await the result. The Davidson Mill at Stelling Minnis is one of these and I expressed my deep concern at the potential disposal of this heritage asset (Grade 1 listed).

Work is continuing to offer a balanced budget at the February Full Council meeting. Great credit is due to Officers and members who have worked so hard to find savings. The savings have only been achieved through a number of redundancies, the majority of which were voluntary.

Contact: Elaine.Martin@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

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County Councillor Susan Carey

Some good news. The Government has responded to the campaign by the councils responsible for social care with £500m of extra funding. Our share of this in Kent is expected to be around £10m which is very welcome. However, our budget challenge is £118m so we still need to make significant savings when we set our budget on 19 February. Our most significant problems continue to be the cost of care for the elderly and the number of children with Special Educational Needs and associated school transport costs.

A reminder that there are a multitude of schemes to help people including financial help, household goods, IT equipment and training and support with mental health. A good place to find out about these is the KCC website www.kent.gov.uk where there is a link on the homepage to 'Kent Together – cost of living support'. It's been pointed out that some people cannot access information online so I am providing some leaflets which could go in the village noticeboard. 'Release the Pressure' which offers free expert advice from trained counsellors is available 24/7 on 0800 107 0160.

I'd also like to promote a new IT device recycling scheme by KCC. It covers equipment such as PCs, laptops, printers and mobile phones and either refurbishes and reuses them or ensures they are recycled. A specialist process is used to ensure 100% data wiping to the strictest UK legislative standards. You can book a home collection at www.kent.gov.uk/DeviceRecyclingScheme

Susan Carey, Member for Elham Valley

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