

A Meeting of the Parish Council was held at The Memorial Hall, The Street, Frittenden on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2023 at 7.30pm.

Present were: Cllr A Staples (Chairman)  
Cllr S Murray  
Cllr J Tuke  
Cllr L Gosbee  
Cllr H Cullingworth

In attendance: Mrs E Nightingale (Clerk), Cllr S Holden (County), Cllr A Fairweather (Borough)

### **PUBLIC FORUM:**

None.

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr R Riley, Cllr R Vernon

#### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct Part 2)**

None.

#### **3. BOROUGH & COUNTY COUNCILLOR UPDATE**

Cllr Fairweather reported that some of the waste fly tipped on Sand Lane would be removed on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2023, but that the remaining waste, being manure, would have to be removed by a different contractor. This was being arranged.

Concerns had again been raised about the Weald Leisure Centre, in particular in relation to staff turnover, cancellations and delays in providing refunds in respect of those cancellations. Cllr Fairweather was liaising with the appropriate officer, but did note that there are some positives, being the fact that the Leisure Centre now had new gym equipment and was going through a decarbonisation programme.

Cllr Fairweather had been liaising with Cllr Gosbee and Cllr Holden in relation to Frittenden's grit bins and he hoped that these would be refilled soon. Cllr Fairweather also noted that the potholes on Staplehurst Road were being repaired, albeit this work was progressing slowly.

Cllr Fairweather reported that Central Government had released £500m through the Local Authority Housing Fund to deal with the next phase of the process for finding more permanent housing for Ukrainian and Afghan refugees. Tunbridge Wells aimed to deliver 13 to 14 properties and was looking at empty homes and empty rentals, as well as properties for sale, in order to achieve that.

Cllr Holden reported that KCC would be holding its budget debate on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2023. It was expected that Council Tax will rise by 5% this year. There was a £650m maintenance backlog in respect of Kent's roads and it was expected that discretionary services would have to be cut back to address the current hole in KCC's finances.

One way of tackling the deficit was to reduce KCC's real estate commitments. As part of this, Cranbrook Children's Centre would be closing, but the services it provided would be continuing. The only change will be that they will operate from Cranbrook library.

Bus subsidies would also be reduced. KCC was the only Local Authority which currently provided such subsidies.

Cllr Holden had been liaising with the appropriate officers in relation to the concerns raised by the Parish Council about the safety of the Bounds Cross Crossroad. Highways was looking in to this and whether any changes could be made to improve safety.

Cllr Staples noted that the Parish Council was concerned at the lack of gritting in Frittenden during the recent cold snap. He appreciated that there were only so many roads that could be covered by KCC, but he felt that Frittenden should be considered a priority given that it had no shops or public transport. If residents could not safely use the roads, they were effectively confined to the village with no facilities available to them. Cllr Staples also noted that there was a primary school in the village and children should be able to get to school safely. He therefore asked whether at least one route in/out of the village could be gritted. Cllr Holden was happy to raise this with the appropriate officers at KCC.

Cllr Staples also raised the issue of lorries parking up in Dig Dog Lane and the problem of them using Bettenham Lane to access the Weald Business Park. One of the businesses, CWP Fencing, specifically advised drivers not to use that access because of the narrow humpback bridge where Bettenham Lane became Dig Dog Lane. However, CWP Fencing had raised a good point, which was that the signage advising drivers that the road was not suitable for long vehicles due to the risk of grounding was halfway down Bettenham Lane, by which time large vehicles would have difficulties turning round and often had to reverse up the lane. It would be more affective if that signage was also placed at the junction with Hareplain Road. Cllr Holden was, again, happy to raise this with the appropriate officers at KCC.

Finally Cllr Holden reported that he had allocated a grant to the ongoing project to produce a list of those buried at Frittenden Burial Ground. That grant was to be applied to printing/publication costs.

#### **4. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS HELD ON THE 3<sup>RD</sup> JANUARY 2023**

It was proposed by Cllr Tuke, seconded by Cllr Gosbee, and **RESOLVED** that the Minutes from the Council meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2023 are a true and accurate record of that meeting. That being so, the Chairman signed the said Minutes.

#### **5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

##### Stones on the verge outside Ferrers, Sand Lane

Cllr Gosbee had written to the owner of Ferrers, but they had indicated that no one had made any complaint about the stones placed on the verge opposite Ferrers. Cllr Staples will liaise with the resident who had raised this issue with him.

##### Dog Fouling

Cllr Cullingworth will report to the next meeting of the Council.

##### King's Coronation Celebrations Open Meeting

Cllr Staples noted that since the Open Meeting in January, the idea of the Big Help Out on the extra bank holiday Monday had been publicised. One idea to link into this was a community clean up of the churchyard and burial ground.

#### ACRK

Cllr Staples had contacted his fellow Chairmen about whether something could be done to prevent the closure of this organisation, but had been met with little interest.

#### KALC Community Awards

Cllr Staples proposed some wording in respect of the Council's nomination and this was agreed. The nomination would be submitted by the Clerk before the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023 deadline.

### 6. PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Cllr Staples had put something in this month's Parish Magazine and he hoped that there would be sufficient interest for contested elections to be held. He was particularly keen to attract prospective councillors from the younger demographic and the Knoxbridge area, as he felt that both were currently underrepresented.

### 7. SPRING LITTER PICK

This will take place on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2023. Cllr Cullingworth, once again, kindly agreed to organise this event.

### 8. PARISH MAP

With the assistance of Phil Betts, who had headed up the relevant Committee, Cllr Staples had established that the Millennium Map was created on behalf of the Parish Council. Its maintenance was therefore the responsibility of the Council. It was proposed by Cllr Staples, seconded by Cllr Murray, and **RESOLVED** by all members present that the Council would meet the cost of protecting the map with an appropriate film that gave it protection from UV. The Clerk will liaise with the Memorial Hall in this regard and would invite the Hall to consider whether it might contribute to the cost given that the map was on display in the Hall.

### 9. POST OFFICE

Concerns had been raised about whether the Post Office would continue to operate from the Memorial Hall. Cllr Staples recognised that the Post Office was not as well attended as it could be, but felt that this was in some part down to the fact that the service was rather erratic. The Post Office was a lifeline for some members of the community and it was disheartening when effort was made to get to the Hall only to find that the Post Office had not attended to run the advertised session. It was felt that a consistent and reliable service should continue to be offered, even if it had to go down from two days a week to one day a week in order to achieve this. It was also commented that it would help if residents were given a better idea of the service that could be accessed as not all Post Offices counters offered the same services. It was proposed by Cllr Staples, seconded by Cllr Cullingworth, and **RESOLVED** by all members present that the Clerk write to Headcorn Post Office to request clarification of the services provided and press for a consistent and reliable service to continue to be provided from the Memorial Hall on at least one day a week.

### 10. SPEEDWATCH

Only two sessions had taken place in the last month because the equipment was being serviced / recalibrated and also because sessions cannot take place when the air temperature is 0 °C due to the risk of ice on the roads.

## 11. PLAYGROUND INSPECTIONS

Cllr Murray had been undertaking the regular inspections and had nothing to report, save for the rotten backboard to the basketball hoop. The Clerk presented three quotes for the supply and installation of a new backboard. It was proposed by Cllr Cullingworth, seconded by Cllr Murray, and **RESOLVED** by all members present that the lowest quote of £300 from Everything Outside be accepted.

## 12. ROAD REPORT

Cllr Gosbee reported that the large and dangerous pothole by Place Farm on the Headcorn road had been repaired but that there were nasty potholes either side of it which had not been repaired. Cllr Gosbee had also requested that repairs be carried out to Mill Lane where the road surface was breaking away near the mill. He had also reported a pot hole half way along Park Lane.

The bridge sign on Biddenden Road had rusted away and so Cllr Gosbee had requested a new one. He had also put forward the suggestion of installing traffic lights at the Bounds Cross crossroads.

Headcorn Road would be closed for repairs sometime before 17<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

Fly tipping along London Lane had been cleared and, as reported by Cllr Fairweather, the fly tipping on Sand Lane was being attended to. There was also fly tipping along Green Lane (off Bettenham Lane) which was yet to be collected. Cllr Gosbee had been told that the relevant agents had been busy removing graffiti in Tunbridge Wells Town Centre.

Cllr Staples noted that the hole in Cranbrook Road, by the junction with Dig Dog Lane, appeared to have been repaired properly this time. He also asked whether something could be done about the faded 30 mph signs on the village gateway. Cllr Gosbee will raise this with Paul Catt.

## 13. PLANNING

### New Applications

22/03703/FULL	Tolhurst Farm, Cranbrook Road, Frittenden Three-year temporary consent for the retention of a mobile home for use as agricultural workers accommodation. <b>Proposed by Cllr Staples, Seconded by Cllr Tuke</b> <b>RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL</b>
23/00011/FULL	Brissenden Farm, Sand Lane, Frittenden Proposed conversion of two existing barns into new dwelling. Change of use of the land to form associated garden, parking, landscaping and biodiversity enhancements. <b>Proposed by Cllr Staples, Seconded by Cllr Gosbee</b> <b>RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND REFUSAL</b>
22/03660/FULL	Old Farm Cottage, Biddenden Road, Frittenden The erection of a detached oak framed annex <b>Proposed by Cllr Staples, Seconded by Cllr Tuke</b> <b>RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL subject to a condition that its use be strictly ancillary to the existing dwelling</b>
22/03716/NMAMD	Buckhurst Farm Buildings, Biddenden Road, Frittenden

	Non-material amendment in relation to 13/01475/FULL (Removal of building no 7 from condition six stating it has to be demolished. This is due to planning permission to turn this into a residential development, relocation of fencing, gates and landscaping) <b>NOTED</b>
23/00168/FULL	Whitsunden Farmhouse, Cranbrook Road, Frittenden Erection of single storey oak framed three bay garage. <b>Proposed by Cllr Cullingworth, Seconded by Cllr Tuke RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL</b>

### Outcome of Previous applications

- None

### Planning appeals

- None.

## 14. GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

- The Tunbridge Wells Public Transport Forum will take place by Zoom at 6pm on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023
- The Parish Council has been invited by KALC to publicise KCC's Consultation on Home to School and Post 16 Transportation for Mainstream and SEND pupils. Cllr Tuke will put the press release on the Community Facebook page.
- The Parish Council had been asked if it would organise the Easter Fun Run again. Charlotte Hunter had once again kindly agreed to lead on this. The Council was happy to agree in principle and would make a formal resolution at the next meeting upon receipt of the proposals/risk assessment for this year's event.

## 15. FINANCE

- It was proposed by Cllr Gosbee, seconded by Cllr Cullingworth, and **RESOLVED** by all members present to pay the accounts as follows:

FRITTENDEN PAYMENTS –February 2023					
Cheque Number	GROSS	VAT	NET	SUPPLIER	DETAILS
BACS	£17.00	Nil	£17.00	Frittenden Memorial Hall	Room Hire – Meeting Room (1 x session + winter surcharge)
BACS	£22.00	Nil	£22.00	Frittenden Memorial Hall	Hall Hire (Coronation Meeting) (2 hours + winter surcharge)
BACS	£213.00	£35.50	£177.50	Kent Grassland Services	Grounds Maintenance – December
BACS	£50.40	£8.40	£42.00	Urbaser Ltd	Rubbish Collection – Litter Bins – January
BACS	£53.60	Nil	£53.60	Mrs Emma Nightingale	Clerk's Expenses – February
BACS	£84.10	Nil	£84.10	Mrs Emma Nightingale	Clerk's Salary – February
BACS	£56.00	Nil	£56.00	HMRC	PAYE
BACS	£237.60	£39.60	£198.00	Unipar Services LLP	Recalibration / servicing of speedwatch equipment

BACS	£213.00	£35.50	£177.50	Kent Grassland Services	Grounds Maintenance - January
DD	£39.30	£1.87	£37.43	Npower	Streetlighting Energy - January
<b>Total</b>	<b>£986.00</b>	<b>£120.87</b>	<b>£865.13</b>		

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:25 pm.

Chairman's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_