

**South Willesborough and Newtown Community Council**  
**www.swancc.org.uk**

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the above Council held virtually  
on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021**

Due to technical issues the meeting started at 7.04pm

**17/21 Record attendance and list apologies for absence**

In attendance

**Present** Sue Mullan (SM) (Chair) David Mullan (DM) Paul Bohill (PB) Nirosha Thilagarajan (NT) Eric Parkinson (EP) Peter Porter (PP) Johnny Hunt (JH) Nick Cane (NC) Andy Rogers (AR) Steve Campkin (SC)

**Apologies** were received from Cllr Koowaree

**Also in attendance:** Rob Woods (RW) and Sarah Evans (SE) (clerks) Peter New (PN) - Kent Police Volunteer & Neighbourhood Watch (NW) Manager

**18/21 Declarations of pecuniary, other significant or voluntary interest**

SC Declared an Other Significant Interest in Item 24/21 as a Council allotment tenant

**19/21 Agree Minutes of the last Council meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and sign**

The Minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true record of proceedings and signed  
Proposed DM - Seconded EP

**20/21 Meeting adjourned for members of the public to raise questions on items on the agenda**

The Chair invited PN to address the Council on the key issues in his report (Item 28/21b) Noted that 98% of the Samuel Peto Way development were now members of NW. PN reiterated comments made at the last meeting about the importance of crime reporting. EP commented on the number of redundant NW Boards in Wainwright Place area. PN agreed to look at removing them.

**The meeting reconvened at 7.15pm**

**21/21 To receive reports from Borough and County Ward Councillors**

AR reported that his most recent newsletter article picked up on relevant key issues and alerted Councillors to a recent spate of verbal and physical attacks on several Borough Councillors which were being investigated by Kent Police

**22/21 To receive and note the draft minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

The Minutes of the meeting were circulated in advance and noted without comment  
Proposed PB – Seconded NT – Agreed unanimously

**23/21 To receive and note the draft minutes of the Planning and Highways Committee of 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and endorse the letter to the Environment Agency on flooding issues**

The Minutes of the meeting were circulated in advance and noted without comment  
Proposed SC – Seconded DM – Agreed unanimously

Members thanked SE for preparing the draft and following a discussion, AR proposed it should be sent to the River Stour (Kent) Internal Drainage Board in addition to the Environment Agency.

**Resolved:** by unanimous agreement to endorse the letter as presented and to send it to both the Environment Agency and the Drainage Board

**Action (SE/RW)**

**24/21 To receive and note the draft minutes of the Allotments Committee of 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

The Minutes of the meeting were circulated in advance and noted. PP commented on possible new methods of communicating with allotment tenants but members felt that sufficient means already existed

Proposed AR – Seconded NC – Draft Minutes agreed unanimously

**25/21 To receive an update from the Communications Working Group**

In addition to the items for decision in 26/21 (below), PP reported on discussions within the group on engaging with young people and making residents more familiar with Members of the Council

**Agreed: Engagement with young people is covered in Item 26/21 below and that the Communications Working Group should further explore ways of familiarizing residents with Council members (Action RW/SE/PP)**

**26/21 To consider matters arising from the Communications Working Group meeting**

**a) To receive the draft version of the Winter 2021 newsletter and agree**

Several Members reported they were unable to open the digital version

**Resolved: Members to be provided with hard copies and given until Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February to make comments to the Clerks (Action SE to provide hard copy)**

**b) To receive a report from the Clerks with recommendations on the Council Plan and agree**

In a long discussion Members considered the priorities for SWAN as defined by residents in a recent survey and the actions and delegations to address their priorities in the Council's first long term Plan.

**Resolved: Members agreed**

**I. prima facie. to the range of interventions and actions outlined in Annex1 to these Minutes (attached)**

**II. to further consider the content of a draft Council Plan and consultation with the Community in an Extraordinary Meeting week commencing 26<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

The Chair and PP proposed a vote of thanks to RW for the work involved in analyzing responses and producing the report

**27/21 To receive and note an update from the Community Assets and Management Working Group**

NC reported that the Group has considered options for a new Community Hub with preference focusing on the Waterside building in Turner Close currently leased by Ashford Borough Council to Kent County Council but used little over the last 12 months. Noted that KCC has been contacted and a response awaited. **Action NC to update Council on progress**

**28/21 Correspondence/E-Mail correspondence received**

**a) To agree the response to the Stour Valley Regional Park Consultation**

**Resolved: Members unanimously agreed to the content of the response and to send it to other local Councils and Ashford Borough Council for information and to gauge other Council's support for the project (Action RW/SE)**

**b) To receive a report from Neighbourhood Watch**

This matter was dealt with in the public session

**c) Any other correspondence of an urgent nature received**

**Members received an urgent request from KALC to nominate local people for an annual Community Award**

**Resolved unanimously to nominate Stefan Heathfield, David Rains MBE and Sue Williams (action SE/RW)**

**29/21 To agree date of next Council meeting as 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021 and items to be included on the agenda**

**1<sup>st</sup> March agreed Continuing Membership of KALC to be included on the agenda**

**30/21 Forum for exchange of information between Councillors**

SC reported on difficulties receiving/accessing e-mails. SE offered to assist

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 9.15pm

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Dated \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
(Chair)

### **Annex 1 to the Minutes of the Meeting**

**a) Interventions agreed for inclusion in the draft Council Plan with delegations and proposed timescales**

- 1) That the Council encourages younger people to have a stronger voice in the community such that **the Communications Working Group, Clerks and Community Engagement Champion**, in liaison with youth service providers, be charged with the development of a **SWAN Youth Engagement and Service Delivery Strategy by December 2022**
- 2) The Council delegates the task of **establishing current and desired service levels for broadband speed and mobile phone connectivity** to the Finance and General Purposes Committee and Clerks by March 2023
- 3) That the **Council works with partners** to
  - **establish the demand for affordable homes locally by end 2021/22**
  - **examine the options for land acquisitions and appropriate legal vehicles (eg Community Land Trust) for delivering affordable homes in the future by end 2022/23** (if agreed -The provision of first affordable homes by end 2024/25)
- 4) That the Council delegates the task of **considering the cost of, and appetite for, a Neighbourhood Plan for the SWAN area to the Planning and Highways Committee by March 2022** with the aspiration to have a Neighbourhood Plan in place by March 2024
- 5) That the **Council**
  - **Continues to lobby the organisations responsible for action to alleviate the flooding problems on an ongoing basis**
  - Elevates the issue with the Press and the local MP if meaningful action is not taken by end March 2022
  - Requests the **Communications Working Group to make residents aware of the above as required on an ongoing basis**
- 6) That the Council

- Delegates the task of **undertaking street by street analysis of parking and traffic issues to the Planning and Highways Committee** including an assessment of the **needs of the disabled, elderly and pushchair users by end March 2022**
  - **Delegates the funding search for any proposed improvements to the Finance and General Purposes Committee as an ongoing activity**
  - Requests the **Communications Working Group to keep residents, Borough Council and County Council and the Press updated with the findings of street analyses on an ongoing basis**
  - Requests **the Community Assets and Management Working Group to identify “parking places for motor vehicles, bicycles and motorcycles” as permitted under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 by end March 2022**
  - **Lobbies ABC/KCC to include SWANCC in the Newtown Parking review by end April 2021**
  - **Lobbies KCC to clarify or amend its policy on dropped kerbs and the use of gardens as parking space by April 2021**
- 7) The provision of a speed warning device – **deadline October 2021** subject to KCC approval
  - 8) Engage with schools to design lamp column banners to enhance the identity of SWAN - **deadline by December 2021 (Communications W/G/Community Champion/Clerks)**
  - 9) A programme of annual Community events – **Ongoing (Communications W/G/Community Champion)**
  - 10) Liaise with the SWAN Centre and other community organisations to establish the scope for additional social events – **By end December 2021 Clerks/Community Champion**
  - 11) A review of the value of the existing means of communicating with residents – **Ongoing (Communications Working Group)**
  - 12) The aspiration to **reduce the number of SWAN residents on the waiting list for Gas House Fields allotments by 50% by end March 2022 (Allotments Committee)**
  - 13) To continue the Council’s programme of meetings and ensure all legal deadlines are met – **Clerks, Chairs - Ongoing**
  - 14) To continue to manage the finances of SWAN CC well and in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 – **Responsible Financial Officers/ Finance and General Purposes Committee - Ongoing**
  - 15) To provide grants to SWAN groups and charitable organisations - **Ongoing (Finance and General Purposes Committee)**
  - 16) To continue to respond to consultations on all planning applications received in the SWAN area – **Ongoing (Planning and Highways Committee)**
  - 17) To continue to educate members in key local and national issues affecting local Councils **Ongoing – Clerks**
  - 18) To lobby for new Primary care facilities in the SWAN area – **Ongoing - Council**
  - 19) The aspiration to provide a new Community Hub as a longer term goal – **Ongoing - (Community Assets & Management Working Group)**

20) That the Council

- Requests the **Communications Working Group/Community and Environment Champions** to educate residents on street cleansing arrangements, reporting incidents and encouraging more volunteers to assist the community litter picking team **by Winter 2022**
- Includes the **Spring Clean** as an annual project in the Council Plan as **an ongoing** exercise in community (**Community Engagement Champion/ Communications Working Group**)

21) That the Council

- delegates the **Planning and Highways Committee** to examine the criticisms of the current bus service provision **by end March 2022**
- requests the **Communications Working Group** to produce **a guide to community transport providers for inclusion in the Council Newsletter by Winter 2022**

**b) Members agreed that further actions are required on the following items**

1) Given that SWAN CC has legal powers to provide both crime reduction and environmental services, Members request **the Clerks in conjunction with the Community, Crime and Environment Champions** to examine the feasibility, costs and benefits of the following options and report back to **the April 2021 meeting**.

- Do nothing – continue to rely on other organisations for crime reduction and janitorial services
- An investment in greater surveillance eg CCTV provision
- An investment in a dedicated PCSO for the area
- An investment in private security with or without powers accredited by the Chief Constable
- An investment in supporting businesses through links with the Ashford Partnership Against Crime
- An investment in enhanced janitorial and landscaping (Handyperson) services – either directly employed or contracted

2) Assess the value, cost and implications of the Community Assets and Management Working Group prioritising the acquisition and maintenance of play areas and waste bins) and any holistic benefits linked to 1) above (**Clerks/ Chair of CAM Working Group by April Council meeting**)

**c) Timescales and formats**

- That Members agreed to the draft timescale (subject to correcting the date of the April Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting)
- No decisions were taken on the proposed format of the final plan or the abridged annual “charter” document

**This annex should be read in conjunction with the Minutes of the Council Meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021 (Item 26/21 b)**