

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

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the above Council held virtually
on Monday 1st March 2021**

31/21 Record attendance and list apologies for absence

Present Sue Mullan (SM) (Chair) David Mullan (DM) Paul Bohill (PB) from 7.08pm Nirosha Thilagarajan (NT) from 7.01pm Eric Parkinson (EP) Peter Porter (PP) Johnny Hunt (JH) Nick Cane (NC) Andy Rogers (AR) Steve Campkin (SC)

Apologies were received from PCSO Oliver Welch

Also in attendance: Rob Woods (RW) and Sarah Evans (SE) (clerks) Peter New (PN) - Kent Police Volunteer & Neighbourhood Watch (NW) Manager, Graham Galpin (GG) –member of the public, Matthew Sweetlove (MS) (audio only) – member of the public and Terry Martin (TM) (Chief Executive- KALC for items 31/21 – 34/21)

32/21 Declarations of pecuniary, other significant or voluntary interest

There were no declarations of interest

33/21 Agree Minutes of the last Council meeting of 1st February 2021 and sign

The Minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true record of proceedings and signed

Proposed AR - Seconded EP Resolved: unanimous agreement

34/21 To consider the Council's future relationship with Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) and agree.

The Chair invited TM to explain, inter alia, the package of benefits available to members of the Kent Association of Local Councils. From his own experience, AR queried KALC's service level on communications with members and its openness and transparency in appointments to KALC groups

TM explained KALC's aspiration for fairness and improved communications including appointments to the Joint Transportation Board in May 2021. DM questioned TM on the value of KALC's outputs

The Chair thanked TM for attending. TM left the meeting and after a short discussion **it was resolved by a majority decision (9 votes for and 1 abstention (DM)) to remain a member of KALC**

35/21 Meeting adjourned for members of the public to raise questions on items on the agenda

No questions were raised on items on the agenda. The Chair invited PN to update the Council on key safety and security issues. Noted that approx. 95% of Turner Close were now members of NW. PN reiterated comments about the importance of crime reporting, of maintaining the place in good order, his links with the new PCSO and advised members on action to be taken in the event of personal abuse. NC commented on the slow101 response times which potentially deter full reporting. PN to feed this back to the Divisional Commander. The Chair thanked PN and invited GG to speak.

GG explained his connection to the Council, his current role in place-making and spoke about Community Council support for a campaign to maintain A+E provision at the William Harvey Hospital. Councillors agreed there was a persuasive case for lobbying to maintain the status quo and for alerting SWAN residents to the threats to the area's key health facility. GG agreed to send information to the Clerks for inclusion in the next newsletter, social media and website.

The Chair thanked GG for his comments and interest.

The meeting reconvened at 7.49pm

36/21 To receive reports from Borough and County Ward Councillors

AR reported on the removal of graffiti in the Newtown Road rail underpass. Following Police intervention, offending graffiti had been obscured by unsightly black paint. Council should keep a watching brief to ensure the underpass is returned to its former state. **(Action –all Councillors and staff)**

NC queried the length of time taken to remove graffiti from street nameplates. Following a short discussion, **it was agreed the Council would explore options for expediting maintenance and janitorial services. (Action RW/SE)**

AR also reported on the progress of the planning application for the erection of a 5G mast in Newtown. **Agreed: this would be discussed in Item 38/21**

37/21 To receive and note the draft minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of 15th February 2021

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

38/21 To receive and note the draft minutes of the Planning and Highways Committee of 17th February 2021

The Minutes of the meeting were circulated in advance and noted with the following comments

- a) Before the issue of HGV's using Newtown Road is discussed at the next Planning and Highways meeting, empirical evidence should be gathered by members where possible to support Council arguments for alleviating the problem **(Action – all members)**
- b) Members endorsed the response to planning application ref 21/173/AS - the erection of a 5G mast but agreed that it should continue to make efforts to contact the developer to understand the reasons for locating it next to residential accommodation and propose its relocation to a less intrusive site
- c) That the future Neighbourhood Plan would seek to reflect the Council's themes of environmental sustainability and partnership working with organisations such as the Kent Wildlife Trust and others

Proposed AR – Seconded NC – Agreed unanimously

39/21 Matters referred to Council by the Planning and Highways Committee for decision

- a) **To recommend the postponement of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan feasibility study for a minimum of 12 months and agree**

Following a short discussion, **it was resolved by unanimous decision to support the recommendation** The Chair approved GG's request to speak on this item. GG offered his expertise to the Council to help with the future plan which was gratefully accepted.

40/21 To receive an update from the Communications Working Group on the Council Plan, Newsletter and Website and Social Media

PP reported

- a) the progress on the Community Plan and thanked SE for her work on the business survey which had been distributed to all businesses in the SWAN area with a copy of the latest newsletter.
- b) the draft timetable for the delivery of the Community Plan which may be affected by Government Covid rule changes
- c) that the future delegations and timescales for Community Plan interventions were discussed and endorsed by the group
- d) the timescales for delivering the next Council newsletter and issues on advertising in it
- e) the need to improve the reader figures for the Council's social media platform
- f) a proposal to appoint a member of the Council to oversee the production and delivery of the Community Plan
- g) a proposal to publish Councillors' images on the website
- h) aspirations for the date, location and style of the Annual Meeting of Electors

Members endorsed the report. Resolved: to agree the following recommendations

- a) To have a draft Community plan and summary document available for members for an Extraordinary meeting at the end of April with a view to launching the plan at the Annual meeting of electors in May 2021 (**Action RW/SE and Communications Working Group**) subject to any new Covid regulations
- b) To produce the Spring newsletter to coincide with the Council plan deadline (**Action RW/SE/ NT**)
- c) That a member of the Council is nominated as lead for the production and delivery of the Community plan at the next meeting of the Council (**Action RW/SE**)
- d) That photos of Councillors and Clerks can to be added to the website - but not obligatory
- e) That we await further Government guidance on the Annual Meeting of Electors before making any firm decisions

41/21 To receive an update from the Community Assets and Management Working Group with recommendations and note

Following residents' comments in the recent survey NC reported on the work undertaken to establish and log the number of play/leisure areas in the SWAN boundary with a view to assessing the ongoing cost of maintenance. **Agreed and noted:** excellent work which may be used to support future Community Plan interventions

42/21 To receive a report of the Clerks on a proposed new cycle/ walking route and associated flood alleviation plan and agree delegation to Planning and Highways Committee

SE introduced a report which was circulated to members in advance with a recommendation that the Council supports the proposal in principle and that matter is referred to the next meeting of the Planning and Highways Committee for further discussion

. Following a short discussion, it was **resolved by unanimous decision to endorse the recommendation (Action RW/SE/ Chair of Planning and Highways Committee)**

43/21 To receive correspondence/e-mails

- a) **Operation London Bridge – Noted**

- b) Any other correspondence of an urgent nature received between 24th February and 1st March 2021 – None received**

44/21 To agree date of next Council meeting as either 6th April 2021 or 12th April 2021 due to Easter Bank Holiday and items to be included on the agenda.

Tuesday 6th April agreed

Items for the agenda –

Any items recommended by members in these minutes

Agree date of Annual Community Council meeting

EP raised issue of damaged sign on Frog Island to be discussed first at the next Planning and Highways meeting

Council strategy for mental health awareness and partnership working

45/21 Forum for exchange of information between Council members

- a) Conservation Area status – DM raised issue of protecting historical and open green space in SWAN through the mechanism of a Conservation Area. Members agreed that this could be one outcome of the future Neighbourhood Plan depending on the advice received from community, Ashford Borough Council planners and experts in the field of conservation
- b) Council interventions in support of well-being and mental health –JH raised this issue It was noted that SWAN CC has no legal powers other than S137 Local Government Act to provide mental health services but it was agreed that this item should be included on the agenda for the next meeting.
- c) SC confirmed his intention to stand in the KCC elections and would send us a copy of the “purdah” rules for our information

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 9.00pm

Signed _____
(Chair)

Dated ____/____/____