

South Willesborough and Newtown Community Council

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Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on Monday 1st November 2021

The meeting started at 7.03pm

140/21 Record attendance and list apologies for absence

Present Sue Mullan (SM) (Chair) David Mullan (DM) Peter Porter (PP) Jacky Godden (JG) Eric Parkinson (EP) Paul Bohill (PB) Nirosha Thilagarajan (NT) (from 7.10pm)

Apologies were received from Councillors Andy Rogers and Steve Campkin (both approved) Cllr Johnny Hunt's unexplained absence was not approved

Also in attendance: Sarah Evans (SE) Rob Woods (RW) (Clerks) Peter New (PN) Neighbourhood Watch, PCSO Oliver Welch (OW) (from 7.39pm) and 2 members of the public.

141/21 Declarations of pecuniary, other significant or voluntary interest

None

142/21 Agree Minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting of 4th October 2021 and sign

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

Proposed DM Seconded PP. Resolved: Unanimous agreement.

143/21 Meeting adjourned for members of the public to raise questions on items on the agenda

The meeting was adjourned and immediately reconvened at 7.05pm

144/21 To receive reports from Borough and County Ward Councillors, Kent Police, Neighbourhood Watch and KALC representatives.

- a) Borough and County Councillors were unavailable
- b) Kent Police report was circulated prior to the meeting and in the absence of a Police
- c) Neighbourhood Watch report was circulated prior to the meeting and presented by PN

NT joined the meeting at 7.10pm

The Chair reluctantly adjourned the meeting at 7.10pm during PN's presentation to allow members to move cars following blocking complaints. PN resumed his presentation at 7.15pm

PP commented on theft of internet deliveries from doorstep. PN commented on opportunistic crimes at this time of year and urged people to report them through the appropriate channels.

PN commented on rough sleepers in communal areas of the Belmont Place flats. DM commented that new security locks had been installed and that anyone gaining access must have been let in. PN to investigate further.

JG commented on rough sleepers in other external areas of the SWAN. Members agreed with JG's suggestion to put notices in those areas if possible, giving contact details of aid agencies.

(action – Clerks)

PN thanked the Chair for allowing Neighbourhood Watch/Police cadets to promote their services at the Craft fair on the 23rd October 2021

The Chair questioned the Police report that crimes had reduced whilst PN's report suggested that the number and range of crimes were of significant concern. PN informed the Council that SWAN is overall a low crime area vis-à-vis other areas of the town but suggested that the Council might like to examine comparative statistics with C I Sparkes (Kent Police) at the December meeting

- d) KALC representatives – Nothing to report but KALC AGM imminent and members will report back at the next meeting
- e) Report from Police Public Engagement Event – The Chair summed up the key points of a meeting facilitated by the Kent Chief Constable in response to concerns about women's safety. Members had no comments.

145/21 To receive and note the draft minutes of the Planning and Highways Committee of 20th October 2021

The Minutes of the meeting were circulated in advance, presented by SE in AR's absence and noted without comment **Proposed PB – Seconded NT – Agreed unanimously**

146/21 To receive and note the draft minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of 25th October 2021 and consider its recommendations A – C, below

The Minutes of the meeting were circulated in advance, presented by PP and noted without comment. Recommendations A-C were discussed separately

Recommendation A – Procuring dedicated Insurance for the Gas House Fields Allotments Capital project incorporating Public Liability cover for all tenants

Proposed PB Seconded EP. Resolved -unanimous agreement

- i. To purchase a specialised Allotmenteeer Insurance from Chris Knott Insurance
- ii. To minimise risk through a policy offering £5million cover at a cost of £296.48
- iii. That the unit cost to tenants, estimated at £3.21 pa, is not passed on this year but will be reviewed in future
- iv. To endorse the current policy of Council-led management on the Gas House Fields site (Action Clerks)

Recommendation B – To adopt a policy for the retention and disposal of Council information

Proposed PB Seconded JG. Resolved - unanimous agreement to adopt a policy based on the schedule in Appendix 1 to these minutes

Recommendation C – Internet Banking Controls

Proposed JG Seconded NT. Resolved -unanimous agreement

- i. To nominate the Chair of the Council and Chair of Finance and General Purposes as named debit card cardholders – to be reviewed at the Annual Meeting of the Council
- ii. Cards to be non-contactless and limited spend

147/21 To note decisions taken by email

Item 137/21 (4) Content of an Expression of interest to occupy Waterside building as a new base for the Council –Majority 9:1 decision (Cllr Rogers at family funeral and did not vote)

Decision noted by members

148/21 To receive a report of the Events Working Group on recommendations for the Annual Christmas event and agree

SE presented a verbal report. Following a discussion, it was **Proposed EP Seconded JG, and resolved by unanimous agreement**

- a) **The Swan Centre location, offered free of charge, and date of 12th December 2021**
- b) **The draft order of service and creative stage centrepiece**
- c) **Unspecified budget for the purchase of catering items and refreshments for children**
- d) **To reject the recommendation to spend £160 on large illuminated letters for the stage rather to engage East Stour schoolchildren in suppling a Christmas message**
- e) **To advertise the event as a traditional Christmas event**

149/21 To receive a verbal report of the Clerk on options for the Alfred Road bus shelter and agree

SE presented a verbal report following discussions with PB and passed mock-up images to members Following a short discussion on the retention of the structure, design, ownership and construction and ongoing maintenance costs, it was **Proposed DM Seconded NT and proposed unanimously**

- a) **To assume responsibility for the former bus shelter which is not listed on KCC land terrier and following no response to the Council's request for confirmation of ownership from Stagecoach**
- b) **To retain and improve the shelter, currently a neglected eyesore, with a preference for a living/edible roof designed to address problems of vandalism.**
- c) **To accept PB's generous offer to fund materials and construction costs**

d) To accept responsibility for any ongoing maintenance costs

150/21 To receive a verbal report from Cllr Bohill on future liaison with representatives of the Newtown Railway Works development and agree

PB expressed concerns about the impact of the development on parking and highways in Newtown DM added that all 90 homes in the neighbouring Klondike site were now sold and that the Planning and Highways Committee should monitor the cumulative effect of the two developments.

JG expressed concern about disruption to residents and businesses in the SWAN area if the programming of the works and those announced earlier by Kent County Council for the A2070 roadworks improvements were not coordinated

The Chair invited PN to comment on any proactive crime prevention interventions.

Resolved: this is a key concern for the Council. It was agreed unanimously to request Cllr Andy Rogers, in his twin capacity as Chair of Planning and Highways Committee and Joint Transportation Board representative, to act as liaison between SWAN Council, the developers, the principal councils and the community.

151/21 To receive an update from the Chair on the removal of play equipment at the Stirling Road play area and agree the Council's response

The Chair updated members on correspondence between the Council and Ashford Borough Council

Resolved by unanimous agreement

- a) **In line with the Council's Community Plan commitment, to start the process of examining the case for transferring children's play areas and associated green spaces from Ashford Borough Council (Deadline 31st March 2022)**
- b) **To continue to examine funding opportunities to replace the equipment including applications for Section 106 funds held by Ashford Borough Council**
- c) **To bring back to next Council meeting**
(Action Clerks)

152/21 To receive a report of the Clerks on options for the future governance of the Events Working Group

Members discussed an options report and the draft terms of reference for the group

Resolved: Proposed PP Seconded EP and agreed unanimously to maintain the Events Working Group as

- a) **a stand-alone group without decision making authority**
- b) **limit its scope and scale to small events in line with the terms of reference as presented (Appendix 2) - (Action Clerks)**

153/21-To receive correspondence/e-mails

- 1) Notification from Ashford Borough Council permitting the process of filling the current Councillor vacancy (Action Clerks)
- 2) Letter from SWAN WI thanking the Council for its grant award
- 3) Notification from Kent County Council that the Waterside building has reopened as a Childrens' services centre
- 4) E-Mail from Ashfords Solicitors (acting for the Council's insurers) notifying that an Employment Tribunal preliminary hearing is likely to be convened at an unspecified future time to hear the claims made by former Councillor Cane. (Action – send copy to Chair)
- 5) Letter from The Queens Platinum Jubilee Beacons with guide to putting on an event. (Action – in the light of 152/21 above, to bring to the attention of the full Council at the next meeting)
- 6) E-Mail from KALC with details of Covid Containment project funding (Action – send to PP for initial comments)

154/21 To agree date of next Council meeting as 6th December 2021 and items to be included on the agenda

Date agreed

Items to be included

Wainwright Place parking: Appointment of Councillor: Presentation from Chief Inspector Sparkes: 2022-23 budget and precept – initial recommendations: Sterling Road play area update

155//21 Forum for exchange of information between Council members

Wainwright Place parking - PB to provide letter for consideration

PP – Communications Working Group not met since July

PP – Updating Councillors on outstanding actions

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 9.08pm

Signed _____ Dated ____/____/_____
(Chair)

APPENDIX 1

1. Items to be permanently retained

Item	Notes
Minutes of council/ committee meetings	<i>Signed copies, once a signed copy is available all notes taken at the meeting and any draft copies of minutes should be disposed of.</i>
Reports and other documents circulated with agendas	<i>If a copy is attached and is included with signed minutes, these can be destroyed.</i>
Title deeds	<i>The original kept in a fire proof safe</i>
Bylaws and orders	<i>One copy of each is sufficient.</i>
Property registers and terriers, including registers of allotments.	
Maps, plans and surveys of property owned by the council or parish meeting.	
Receipt and payment books	<i>For historical records</i>
Maps created under the provision of the Right of Way Act 1932.	
Community magazines and newsletters	<i>One copy of each edition. These are a very useful social history account.</i>
Press cuttings book Photographs	<i>Also useful for social history and show the changes taking place over time in the area</i>
Cine film and video recording.	<i>Archived in a fire proof container</i>
Planning applications and related papers for major or controversial developments; also planning appeal decisions	<i>Previous applications are sometimes used to weight the refusal/granting of applications. Appeal decisions can be used as a reason for further permissions or future refusal.</i>
Correspondence and papers on important local issues or activities	<i>Perhaps these could be précised to aid archiving.</i>

2. For review for possible retention.

These documents should be passed to the County Archivist **only after the minimum prescribed length of time, and when no longer required by the Clerk or Council.**

Item	Notes
Appeal decisions	<i>See above</i>
Leases, agreements, contracts and wayleaves	<i>Retain while in force.</i>
Quotations and tenders for major works	<i>Retain for 12 years</i>

3. For destruction when no longer of use to the Council or Clerk (please see additional notes)

Item	Notes
Agendas	<i>P if minutes do not survive</i>
Councillors' declarations of office	<i>P if minutes do not survive</i>
Nominations from parish council elections	<i>P if minutes do not survive</i>
Quotations and tenders for minor works	<i>R after 12 years S of L</i>
Unsuccessful tenders	<i>R after 3 years (unsuccessful contractors may wish to contest the Council's decision)</i>
Routine correspondence and papers	<i>Depending on the issues raised in the correspondence, some papers may be require longer than others.</i>
Planning applications for minor works where granted	<i>Retain until development has been complete</i>
Planning applications for minor works where permission is refused	<i>Retain until the appeal dates have expired.</i>
Scale of fees	<i>R after 5 years, S of L</i>
Insurance policies	<i>Can be destroyed at the end of their current year. However if a claim may be on the way then keep for 7 years.</i>
Cash & Petty cash books Receipts books of all kinds Postage stamp & telephone books Paid invoices Paid Cheques VAT records	<i>Minimum time is 6 years. Due to S of L, VAT regulations & tax purposes</i>
Bank statements, including deposit /savings accounts. Paying in books Cheque stub books Time sheets	<i>For audit purposes. (Some of these may also of use for social history)</i>
Cash & Petty cash books Financial returns to district auditor	<i>May be destroyed, but P if general accounts not exist</i>
Wages records	<i>R after 12 years minimum, S of L</i>
Emails, memos between Councillors, Clerk and Councillors, members of the public and the Clerk and Councillors.	<i>D After completion of issue, or every 18 mont whichever is the longer</i>

P=Permanently Keep

R= Send to county archivist – they can review as required.

D=Destroy at the end of their usefulness or at the end of the Statute of Limitations (S of L)

Policy Prepared by: R Woods/S Evans
Approved by Council on: 1 st November 2021
Policy became operational on: 6 th December 2021
Next review date: December 2023

APPENDIX 2 - Terms of Reference for an Events Working Group

1. Membership

- All members of the Council are invited to form the working group to meet as and when required
- The Working Group may be supplemented with external expertise
- The Clerk will only attend by invitation

2. Leader

- The leader of the working group will be appointed by the group. The leader will be the working group's main point of contact for Council staff, Council members and members of the public.

3. Powers

- Working groups cannot make decisions on behalf of the Council, and any recommendations made will be subject to approval by the Council or other suitably delegated committees or individuals (eg FGP or Proper Officer)

4. Responsibilities and Areas of Operation

- To oversee the running and organisation of small- scale council-run events** ensuring they run legally and reflect well on the council as a whole.
- To invite specialists to support the work of the group
- To report make recommendations to Council for future events.
- To ensure protocols and guidelines from the Councils insurance company are adhered to.
- To ensure Council events do not clash with other community groups.
- To develop the event budget to be agreed by Finance and General Purposes Committee or Council.
- To liaise with the Communications Working Group on publicity

** a small-scale Council event is an event which the Council has agreed may be planned and organized by the Working group, subject to the limitations defined in 3) above and 6) below

5. Minutes

Informal minutes will be taken at the meeting and distributed to all Council members

6.. Reporting to Council

The Leader of the Working Group must report recommendations to Full Council for agreement