

South Willesborough and Newtown Community Council

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Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on Monday 6th December 2021

156/21 Record attendance and list apologies for absence

Present Sue Mullan (SM) (Chair) David Mullan (DM) Peter Porter (PP) Jacky Godden (JG) Paul Bohill (PB) Nirosha Thilagarajan (NT)

Apologies were received from Councillors Eric Parkinson, Steve Campkin and Andy Rogers (all due to illness). 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) Chief Inspector Nick Sparkes (NS) Prospective co-optee, Andy Hodges (AH) and 2 members of the public.

157/21 Declarations of pecuniary, other significant or voluntary interest

None

158/21 To receive reports from PCSO Welch, Peter New (Neighbourhood Watch) and Chief Inspector Sparkes on policing in the SWAN area followed by questions.

OW submitted a written report in advance of the meeting and emphasised that work was continuing to address current crime issues and that there had been no reports of anti-social behaviour in the area. He also signposted members to a new messaging system, My Community Voice and urged its use.

DM/JG questioned OW on the increase in and legality of e-scooters. OW replied that some had already been seized and that the Police was working with retailers to educate them on the legality of e-scooter ownership/use.

PN also submitted an advance report. Picking up on the good progress made so far in partnership, he complimented the Council and PB for his contribution as Crime Champion. Noted - new watch schemes launched in Cudworth Road and Gladstone Road increasing the coverage from 4% of SWAN streets to an impressive 69% in one year.

PN made members aware of new crime trends, his offer to homeowners to have smoke alarms fitted by Kent Fire and Rescue Service and dedicated campaigns to protect Nepalese residents (Op Everest) and link with those involved with new build homes (Op Horizon) He cited the value of an increasing Neighbourhood Watch/social media in a case study, when, following a robbery, residents were encouraged to submit images/videos from domestic CCTV systems to assist the Police.

SE gave a precis of the crime interventions undertaken by SWAN, the timeline of key events and three examples of interventions undertaken in partnership.

NS expressed his gratitude to all for the work undertaken in partnership and cited the relationship between SWAN, Police and Neighbourhood Watch as a model for others, describing it as "Gold Standard" and "outstanding" He then explained the key crime issues affecting the area including the increase in fraud activity.

He urged that we should continue with our plan and offered suggestions including investment by SWAN Council in property marking equipment and advice giving.

With reference to the Safer Streets Award he advised that it would be used primarily in the Victoria Ward but that neighbouring areas like SWAN would also benefit indirectly.

NS then answered questions from DM/PB/JG/SM and PP on the problems of Homes in Multiple Occupation, the new lorry park, the Urban Area PSPO, CCTV legality and digital fraud

The Chair thanked the three attendees. OW/NS left the meeting PB/PN left the meeting temporarily at 8.15pm and returned at 8.30pm The meeting remained quorate.

159/21 Agree Minutes of the Council meeting of 1st November 2021 and sign

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

Proposed PP Seconded NT Resolved: Unanimous agreement.

160/21 Meeting adjourned for members of the public to raise questions on items on the agenda and to hear a presentation from a prospective candidate for the current Council vacancy

The meeting was adjourned at 8.19pm. There were no questions from the floor. AH offered his reasons for wanting to become a coopted Council member

AH was asked by the Chair to leave the room to allow members to discuss his presentation.

The meeting reconvened at 8.24pm

161/21 Resolution to appoint a candidate to Council vacancy

Resolved: Unanimous agreement to appoint AH to the current vacancy on the Council

(Action- Clerks to complete documents and advise Ashford Borough Council)

AH returned and joined the Council members present for the remainder of the meeting

162/21 To receive reports from Borough and County Ward Councillors and KALC representatives

Both members were ill and could not join the meeting. SM read AR's written report

- a) Ward work has mainly involved issues with waste and fly tipping. A good response from Ashford Borough Council in speedy removal of waste
- b) Pre tree works ready for Jubilee planting- no notices were put up to explain what was happening and also questions raised about what was being sprayed by contractors to pre treat the ground. This caused a lot of feedback on social media. Aspire has confirmed that they will not use the same contractor going forward. Further pre work will take place before planting which includes the installation of knee high fencing.
- c) Parking at the SWAN Centre ABC confirmed there was no plan to expand parking at Bromley Green.

With reference to the Minutes of the KALC meeting, SM explained the key decisions taken at the last KALC area meeting. There were no questions raised

163/21 To receive and note the draft minutes of the Staffing Committee of 3rd November 2021 and consider its recommendations on amendments to staff Contracts of Employment and agree to authorise the Chair to sign.

The draft minutes were circulated in advance

Proposed JG Seconded NT and resolved unanimously to note the draft minutes, agree the recommended amendments to the current Contracts of Employment and authorise SM to sign revised contracts on behalf of the Council. (Action Clerks/SM)

164/21 To receive and note the draft minutes of the Planning and Highways Committee of 17th November 2021 and consider the following recommendations

- 1) To agree a letter to Ashford Borough Council prepared by AR/RW
- 2) To support plans in principle to design out motorcycle nuisance subject to confirmation of responsibility for ongoing maintenance costs and insurance and to

offer a contribution of up to £2000 subject to Finance and General Purposes Committee approval

The draft minutes were circulated in advance. DM presented the draft minutes to members **Proposed NT Seconded JG and resolved unanimously to note the draft minutes, agree to the content of the letter to Ashford Borough Council and endorse the recommendation and caveats to design out motorcycle nuisance**

Action Clerks to 1) Prepare and send finished version of the letter (Recommendation 1) to Ashford Borough Council and advise on responsibility for ongoing maintenance/insurance for the proposed motorcycle nuisance barriers (Recommendation 2) prior to submission to Finance and General Purposes Committee

165/21 To receive and note the draft minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of 22nd November 2021 and consider its recommendations to endorse the revised Privacy Policy

The draft minutes were circulated in advance. PP expanded on several decisions including actions taken on defibrillators, grant awards and the draft budget/precept increase for 2022/23 which will be presented to Council for approval at the January meeting.

Resolved: Proposed PB Seconded DM and resolved unanimously to note the draft minutes and endorse the Privacy Policy

166/21 To receive an update from the Communications Working Group with recommendations

The notes of the Group meeting were circulated in advance. PP presented a report on the community plan and the Council newsletter production

Resolved: Agreed unanimously with the recommendation to amend the deadline for the production of the Winter edition of the newsletter from 31st January 2022 to 28th February 2022 and subsequent editions by 31st May, 31st August and 30th November 2022

167/21 To receive an update from the Events Working Group with recommendations.

The notes of the Group meeting were circulated in advance. SM/SE presented a review of the recent craft fair, plans for the Christmas Carol concert in the light of new covid restrictions and Jubilee Beacons celebration and clarified the group's role in the creation of a larger event in 2022.

1) Craft Fair – Recommendations

- a) To ask FGP to consider an Events budget
- b) To ask Council to consider a second craft fair Easter 2022
- c) To agree to consider a stall or serving at the school Summer fete.

Resolved: Agreed Unanimously

2) Christmas Concert – Recommendations

- a) To limit numbers to 112 – children to arrive from 2:30pm to ensure seating for parents and children.
- b) To ask community groups to advertise the event and use SWAN Facebook and noticeboards, rather than a large advertisement in addition to the newsletter already sent to allow for the reduced capacity.
- c) Purchase of disposable cups and plates and tinsel for children on the stage at minimal cost
- d) A minimal top up of further refreshments remaining from the craft fair.
- e) £10 - Laminating of the signs and the purchase of artificial tealights for the stage decorations
- f) Order of service amendments
- g) First carol to be introduced by Peter Porter

- h) SE to do opening prayer.
 - i) Remove the item by guides or brownies and nurseries as they are not able to participate
 - j) East Stour school to provide the angels and the singing of away in a manger, therefore move the standing of children on the stage to after singing Away in Manager
- All other details as drafted. **Resolved: Agree unanimously**

3) Jubilee Beacons – Recommendations

- a) To facilitate an event at the SWAN Farm for the SWAN area
- b) SE to liaise with SWAN Farm regarding their plans for facilitating of the event and enquire as to what Council support could be beneficial
- c) To request FGP Committee to consider a donation to SWAN Farm if required

Resolved: Agreed unanimously

4) Clarification of the Group's role in managing a large event in 2022 – Recommendations

- a) A large event should be overseen by the full Council but not directly managed by it
- b) With limited time available, to recommend that an extraordinary meeting of the Council is convened and to request two members of the Council to call it.

Resolved: To agree unanimously with the recommendations

NT and AH immediately proposed that an extraordinary meeting is called on a date to be agreed.

Resolved: By unanimous agreement to hold an extraordinary meeting with the specific purpose of considering the scale, theme and scope of a large community event in Summer 2022; to develop a working brief for event organisers and a draft budget.

168/21 To discuss the response from Ashford Borough Council to the removal of play equipment on Stirling Road play area.

The Chair read out a verbatim e-mail response from the Council's Head of Housing Services. Members expressed their disquiet over the wording of a footnote which appears to question the value of Community Council's involvement in a future consultation exercise.

Resolved: By unanimous agreement to bring back to the next meeting and agree a response

169/21 Resolution to appoint Cllr Bohill as representative of the Council on the Management Board of South Willesborough and Newtown Community Association (SWAN Centre)

Resolved. Unanimous agreement

170/21 To consider a Community Awards nomination process

A report on ideas for a Community-led awards scheme was circulated prior to the meeting Following a short discussion it was

Resolved: By unanimous agreement

- a) That Council should involve the community in nominating local people or businesses for local awards in the future
- b) That the Council further considers the award categories and the decision making mechanism at a future meeting

171/21 To receive an update from the Clerks on the results of the Community Plan Consultation and endorse the forward plan

A draft forward plan was circulated in advance. In discussion, it was reported that there had been no response from residents to the Council's Community Plan consultation including the proposed increase in precept to pay for additional services.

Proposed PP Seconded PB and agreed unanimously to adopt the forward plan and to review its progress at regular intervals.

172/21 To receive a verbal report of the Clerk on the purchase of a second laptop and to agree the beneficiary

Councillors were advised that funding had been secured but it was necessary under the Council's Procurement Policy to request 3 quotations

Resolved: agreed unanimously to purchase a laptop from Curry's Ltd at a cost of £570 and to agree to add Curry's to the list of payment beneficiaries held at the bank.

173/21 To receive urgent correspondence/e-mails

- a) KALC – Following consultation with KCC, a recommendation to apply for funding for the allotments project as a match for income already pledged by Ashford Borough Council and Member grants (Clerks to action)

174/21 To agree the dates of the meetings for 2022 and items for the agenda of the January meeting

Following a discussion, it was **unanimously agreed to a) close the Council office from 29th - 31st December 2021 - b) to adopt the forward schedule of dates below and c) to include the Lorry Park on the agenda for the next meeting.**

<u>Council</u> <u>(Mondays except</u> <u>Bank holidays)</u>	<u>Planning and</u> <u>Highways</u> <u>(Wednesdays)</u>	<u>Finance and General</u> <u>Purposes</u> <u>(Mondays)</u>	<u>Allotments</u>	<u>Staffing</u>
10 January 2022	19 January 2022	24 January 2022	TBD	
7 February 2022	16 February 2022	21 February 2022		
7 March 2022	16 March 2022	21 March 2022		
4 April 2022	20 April 2022	25 April 2022	TBD	TBD
3 May (Annual)	18 May 2022	23 May 2022		
24 May – 6.30pm Meeting of Electors				
6 June 2022	15 June 2022	20 June 2022		
4 July 2022	20 July 2022	25 July 2022	TBD	TBD
August - NO MEETING	17 August 2022	August - NO MEETING		
5 September 2022	21 September 2022	26 September 2022		
3 October 2022	19 October 2022	24 October 2022		TBD
7 November 2022	16 November 2022	21 November 2022	TBD	
5 December 2022	14 December 2022	19 December 2022		
9 January 2023	18 January 2023	23 January 2023		

175/21 Forum for exchange of information between Council members

JG highlighted the possible implications (including crime related implications) for SWAN of up to 700 lorries a day (1400 movements) using the new Truckstop and A2070

176/21 To agree under Section 12a of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude members of the public from the following part of the meeting to allow members to discuss matters of a personal nature

Resolved: Unanimous agreement

Members of the public vacated the room at this point and in the light of the importance of Item 177/21, members agreed to waive the Standing Order requiring meetings to finish at 9.30pm

177/21 To receive reports of the Chairs of Staffing and Finance and General Purposes Committees with recommendations on staffing adjustments, costs and job descriptions.

The Chair of Staffing Committee explained the reasons for the proposed staffing adjustments and recommended their endorsement by Council. The Chair of Finance and General Purposes Committee explained the cost and budget implications and recommended the revised costings to Council. Draft job descriptions were distributed to members at the meeting. Following a discussion it was

Resolved: Proposed DM Seconded PB and agreed unanimously

a) to endorse the recommendations of the Staffing Committee relating to adjustments in staff titles, salary levels and qualification timetable

b) to endorse the recommendations of the Finance and General Purposes Committee relating to the impact of the staffing adjustments on the revised budget 2021/22 and full year budget 2022/23

c) to endorse the revised job descriptions

d) the staffing adjustments will be put in place from 1st January 2022

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 9.46pm

Signed _____
(Chair)

Dated ____/____/____