

South Willesborough and Newtown Community Council
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Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 7th November 2022

The meeting opened at 7pm

180/22 Record attendance and list apologies for absence

181/22 Declarations of pecuniary, other significant or voluntary interest

182/22 Agree Minutes of the Council meeting of 3rd October 2022 and sign (attached)

In Attendance: Sue Mullan (SM) David Mullan (DM) Andy Rogers (AR), Paul Bohill (PB) Jacky Godden (JG) Eric Parkinson (EP) Steve Campkin (SC)

Also, in attendance – Sarah Evans (SE)- Community Council Manager, Peter New (PN) Neighbourhood Watch and PCSO Megan Macleod and 5 members of the public

Apologies Nirosha Thiagarajan apologies approved

183/22 Meeting adjourned for members of the public to raise questions on items on the agenda (This item will last no more than 15 minutes in total)

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05pm and reopened at 7:07pm

184/22 Resolution to appoint a candidate to Council vacancy

Peter Porter gave a brief presentation to the Council explaining that his wife and himself had decided to stay in the area for at least another year, that he had missed the Council immensely and would very much like to re-join.

Resolved Proposed AR Seconded DM and agreed unanimously to co opt Peter Porter as new member.

185/22 To receive reports from

- a. Ashford Borough Council Ward representative
 - b. Kent County Council Ward representative
 - c. Police and Neighbourhood Watch representatives
 - d. KALC representatives
 - e. Swan Centre representative
 - f. SWAN CC Chair on meeting with Cllr Clarkson, 27th October 2022
- a) AR gave a ward members report advising the Joint Transport Board would meet 6th December that a petition had been received regarding parking at the sorting office and a risk assessment was being carried out regarding 2 possible parking bays. AR advised KALC would meet 10th November 2022, AR would be meeting Friday this week as an Observer for Newtown Works, Common issues at present were potholes however this is the wrong time for repairs as they will crack and reopen, graffiti and fly-tipping was regularly being reported. AR also advised that he has become a Committee member for the Royal British Legion Ashford Branch and supporting the local poppy appeal.
- b) SC gave a Councillor Members read verbatim see appendix
SM asked if the bus routes could be looked in a more cohesive way. SE advised a meeting was being pressed for with KCC Transport Team SC said he would assist the Community Council manager in arranging this.

- c) Peter New gave a report read verbatim see appendix, and that he had been visiting residents on the new Klondyke site and were of all nationalities and 1 was an Air BNB. PCSO Megan Macleod explained that she had been seconded from Maidstone Thursday and started on active duty Friday that she had been a CPSO in Maidstone for 3 years and would be a PC In January 2023. Her area was 9 areas of Ashford named North Rural covering Smeeth to Ruckinge and that PCSOs would now all work together to attend Parish meetings. Megan explained that a policing review would be announcing the future plans for the role of PCSOs on 23rd November 2022 and methods going forward and the possible return of a local police officer to each area. That at present Ashford had 3 Operational PCSOs. With regard to managing crime PCSO Macleod advised CCTV signage and CCTV look alike cameras as a deterrent. EP advised PCSO Macleod of an active scam regarding asking for a bank transfer for purchases of online local goods for sale and then the bank details were being used for fraudulent purchases. AR asked the PCSOs perspective on the new Airbnb venue on Klondyke. Who advised it would need to be monitored but it would be varying from week to week.

186/22 To receive and note the draft minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of 24th October 2022 (attached) and consider the following recommendations

- a) **That a proposed action in the draft Environment Strategy relating to the bulk purchase of energy audits is removed and replaced by one to provide complementary area enhancements at a cost of £3000**
- b) **That the overall budget proposed in the draft Environment Strategy of £20000 in 2023-24 represents good value for money given the high number of cross-cutting links with other themes in the Community Plan and the Council's wider objectives**
- c) **Given b) above, that the Environment Strategy Action Plan is deemed to form the basis of the 2023-24 Community Plan re-write. (subject to any other relevant recommendations of the Staffing and Allotments Committees)**
- d) **That the relevant Community Plan themes and Council's wider objectives are included in the final version of the Environment Strategy.**
- e) **In the light of the current financial situation, that expenditure and income 2023-24 is consistent with the Council's aspiration to maintain local taxation at 2022-23 levels such that the following are re-visited prior to the Council's agreement of the final budget,**
 - I. **The first draft expenditure budget of £87,850 for 2023-24**
 - II. **Estimated size of the 2022-23 year-end reserve to provide members with precept subsidy options**
 - III. **Possible external funding opportunities**
 - IV. **The brief for a 2023-24 Community event currently estimated at £10500 in total offset by an income prediction of £5500 from external funding sources (i.e. £5000 net cost to SWANCC)**

Resolved: - Proposed DM and Seconded EP to receive and note the draft minutes of Finance and General Purposes Committee of 24th October 2022

- a) **Resolved: Proposed AR and JG and agreed unanimously That a proposed action in the draft Environment Strategy relating to the bulk purchase of energy audits is removed and replaced by one to provide complementary area enhancements at a cost of £3000**
- b) **Resolved: Proposed AR and Seconded DM and agreed unanimously that the overall budget proposed in the draft Environment Strategy of £20000 in 2023-24 represents good value for money given the high number of cross-cutting links with other themes in the Community Plan and the Council's wider objectives**
- c) **Resolved: Agreed unanimously Given b) above, that the Environment Strategy Action Plan is deemed to form the basis of the 2023-24 Community Plan re-write. subject to any other relevant recommendations of the Staffing and Allotments Committees as well as items brought forward at this meeting.**
- d) **Resolved: Proposed AH and Seconded JG and agreed unanimously that the relevant Community Plan themes and Council's wider objectives are included in the final version of the Environment Strategy.**
- e) **Resolved: Proposed AR and Seconded PB Agreed unanimously In the light of the current financial situation, that expenditure and income 2023-24 is consistent with the Council's aspiration to maintain local taxation at 2022-23 levels such that the following are re-visited prior to the Council's agreement of the final budget,**

- V. The first draft expenditure budget of £87,850 for 2023-24
- VI. Estimated size of the 2022-23 year-end reserve to provide members with precept subsidy options
- VII. Possible external funding opportunities
- VIII. The brief for a 2023-24 Community event currently estimated at £10500 in total offset by an income prediction of £5500 from external funding sources (i.e. £5000 net cost to SWANCC)

187/22 To receive and consider the draft Environment Strategy in the light of FGP recommendations and above and agree

Members had a long discussion on the content of this plan and the merits of it going forward and the support it would give to further Council objectives and possible grant funding. It was noted the time and effort in the writing the plan of Clerk Rob Woods and also the contribution of SC to this draft.

Resolved Proposed AH Seconded AR and agreed unanimously to adopt the Draft Environment Strategy and to thank RW for his work with SC towards it.

188/22 To consider any further items for the community plan going forward from March 2023 in the light of FGP recommendations c) -d) above and agree

Resolved: Proposed JG Seconded SC and agreed unanimously to add the following items

- A) To investigate the possibility of additional parking on 1) the V shape pedestrian area between Mead Road and Londis which currently is authorised for Royal Mail to use as parking for further use by residents, 2) The disused area on Fairview Drive which formerly held the recycling. 3) the end of Curtis road which is currently just an open area with minimal grass and no planting.
- B) To list assets of community value in the area to ensure the Community Plan goal of protecting the rural feel of the area. Localism Act 2011 ss87-108
- C) To investigate the continuing aspiration to put street lighting on the Spinney
- D) To consider remedial works to the Carpark on Alfred Road to reduce the wall and clear the rubbish so it can be used by residents to for parking
- E) To continue to investigate the management of parking on Newtown and the role of CPM UK Car Park Management.
- F) To investigate the planning application for Fairview which residents believe should have included a wildlife corridor, a pond and swift boxes in the Tower structures

189/22 To discuss with Roger Crouch, Event Organiser, the plan for the July event in the light of FGP recommendation e) iv above and agree

Resolved This item was postponed to the next FGP meeting due to staff sickness meaning Roger Crouch could not be invited to attend.

190/22 To receive and note the draft minutes of the Planning and Highways Committee of 2nd November and consider its recommendations

AR gave an overview of the Committees decisions and advised members that the Committee had decided to object to the proposed 5g Mast siting on Newtown Road that this was a contentious issue and asked if any members had any opinions they wished to raise. Opinions were given, AR advised on the need for help to distribute parking notices in the SWAN area and that the Committee recommended the Council purchased waterproof bags of a recyclable nature to protect them and requested Members helped to distribute them in troublesome areas raised by the committee.

Proposed DM and Seconded AH and agreed by all members except SC who abstained

1) support the Planning and Highways decision to object to the siting of the 5G mast 2) to assist in the circulation for the parking notices not only to the roads recommended by Planning and Highways but any parking in the area that was obstructive as per the terms of the car park notice. The purchase of waterproof bags to protect the planning notices compostable if possible.

191/22 To receive and note the draft minutes of the Staffing Committee of 26th October and consider the following recommendations

- a) To endorse the job description of the Public Spaces Protection Officer (attached) subject to less stress being put on crime reduction activities
- b) To request full Council to consider and agree the job title
- c) To endorse the revised staffing budget 2022-23 and staffing budget 2023-24 (attached)

Resolved Proposed PB and seconded AH and agreed unanimously to

- 1) **Endorse the job description and to review the final content in December 2022**
- 2) **To give the job title as Public Spaces Enhancement Officer**
- 3) **To reject the revised staffing budget due to notification of the NALC pay award.**

192/22 To receive a verbal report of the Community Council Manager on the review of committee membership.

Each of the committees was discussed and membership, roles and quorum of each considered.

Resolved Proposed JG and Seconded SC Andy Rogers to be Chair of Finance and General Purposes Committee, Sue Mullan to be Vice Chair of Finance and General Purposes Committee, Peter Porter to be a member of the Allotments Committee and a member of the Communications Working Committee.

193/22 To receive a verbal report from Cllr Godden on low water levels in the Willesborough Dyke and the Moat

JG gave a verbal report on concerns about the low water levels in the Willesborough Dyke, the low levels of water in the moat and the impact of the Land drainage storage pond via the works on Junction 10 and 10a. Also concerns regarding the management of the water quality and water flow into the dykes of SWAN

Resolved Proposed JG and seconded SC to expand the terms of reference of the Planting and Biodiversity group to investigate these concerns and to expand the terms of reference for the Planning and Highways Committee to work in conjunction with the Planting and Biodiversity Working group to consider these concerns and agree actions.

194/22 To consider a request from developers/KCC for street naming on Orbital Park (attached)

Members discussed a previously circulated email proposing a new road name for the area.

Resolved Proposed SC and Seconded AR to propose the name of the road to be George Koowaree Crescent.

Actions SE to investigate the option to liaise with the family to confirm their acceptance.

195/22 To consider a risk assessment for work associated with planting on verges abutting highways and agree (attached)

Proposed AR and seconded DM and agreed unanimously to adopt the draft risk assessment and the purchase of all items required including increasing the planned shed for tools for staff as listed in the risk assessment. See Appendix for risk assessment and costs incurred.

196/22 To consider the need for a SWANCC Youth Strategy and agree

Members discussed the anti-social behaviour over the summer and the fact that there was a 7-week holiday and no activities for young people in the area during the last week, that this had been when the spate of vandalism and graffiti had occurred and the unmet need for youth activity for age 12 and upwards over Summer 2023.

Resolved Agreed unanimously to consider the possibility of a youth programme during the first and last week of the summer focusing on using graffiti skills in a controlled environment plus the use of the area for safety and activity. To invite Gareth Davies a known youth worker with experience in this field to attend the December 2022 meeting and present options for the Council to consider.

197/22 To receive urgent correspondence received

198/22 To agree date of next meeting as 5th December 2022 and any agenda items

Date agreed as 5th December 2022

199/22 Forum for exchange of information between Council Members

Christmas meal planned for 11th December.

There being no further items to discuss the chair closed the meeting at 9:10pm

Signed Chair _____

Date _____