

Minutes of **RYARSH PARISH COUNCIL** meeting
Held virtually on **Monday 11th January 2021** at **8.00pm**

Councillors Present:

Cllr M McKinlay (Chairman)
Cllr I Emson (Vice Chairman)
Cllr M Barton
Cllr T Butler
Cllr D Storey

Also in attendance:

L Mackie (Clerk)
County Councillor Hohler (left at 8.15pm)
Borough Councillor A Kemp (left at 8.20pm)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs C Martin and J Sutton, Borough Councillor P Montague and PCSO Robinson.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes arising from the Parish Council Meeting on 7th December 2020 were agreed by all Councillors and will be signed by Cllr McKinlay at the next available opportunity.

4. EXTERNAL REPORTS

(a) County Councillor Hohler

- The number of Covid-19 cases in Kent is serious, and this has impacted on KCC. For example, 25% of workers collecting waste are unable to work due to Covid, which has impacted on refuse collections. It is a challenging time for us all.
- KCC has suspended the restriction on travel cards not being able to be used before 9.30am, to support people during the pandemic.
- HGVs have been a tremendous problem, although traffic levels are low at the moment. There is much more paperwork to complete before crossing the channel, and lorries or visitors will be sent home to complete the paperwork. The Covid tests to allow you to cross the channel are not just being carried out in Kent, and some are carried out before the County to prevent queues here. 32 drivers are currently isolating following positive tests.
- KCC can enforce anti-social HGV parking in 7 Districts in Kent. Illegally parked vehicles will be clamped and will have to pay a £150 release fee. Residents are encouraged to report illegally or anti socially parked HGVs through the Country Eye App. Through the app you can upload a photo or number plate and location of the vehicle in the HGV category. You can also report fly tipping through the app.
- Dover District are clearing up all the litter on the A20 and M20 following the recent problems of lorries being parked and unable to cross the channel.
- If anyone is having problems of any kind due to the pandemic, there is a website for Kent Together (available at www.kent.gov.uk) and a helpline 0300 41 92 92.
- Asymptomatic testing sites are now set up in Kent where residents can be tested regularly even without symptoms. It is believed 1 in 3 people carry Covid with no symptoms. The nearest site is currently at Larkfield Library in Martins Square, Larkfield, ME20 6QW. Results are available within an hour. More sites will be opening in Tonbridge & Malling.
- The KCC draft Budget has been submitted with a press release. The budget has been incredibly difficult and the KCC element of Council Tax will be going up by £67.50 a year for Band D households, equivalent to £1.30 per week. There is pressure on adult social services

Signed

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Date

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and an amount is being ringfenced for this. Following the recent public consultation, KCC have done their best to prioritise the things that residents wanted them to prioritise.

(b) Borough Councillor Kemp

- TMBC is doing all it can to help during the pandemic, including grants to small businesses
- There is no new information about the Local Plan, and the Council is waiting for their legal advisors to respond
- TMBC finances are facing problems as well. The loss of income in the past year has had a huge impact. Government has made generous grants so the situation is not as bad as anticipated, but there will need to be an increase in the TMBC element of the Council Tax.
- TMBC has a new website under construction which should go live in July.

(c) Police

The police are not permitted to attend meetings on Zoom as they are not secure. Information is circulated from the E-Watch Community Safety Information Hub and Rural Police Reports.

5. PLANNING

(a) Plans Received for Comment

- i. **TM/20/02970/AGN - Park Barn Farm, Park Farm Road** - Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed: formation, alteration or maintenance of a private way for agricultural or forestry use.

Details have been received but it is not a planning application which the Parish Council can comment on, but is for TMBC to decide if planning is required.

(b) Approvals

There were no approvals to report.

(c) Refusals

There were no refusals to report.

(d) Any other Planning Matters

It was noted that a neighbour had raised objections to the planning applications for Hillview, London Road which TMBC will take into account.

The Clerk will circulate correspondence from West Malling Parish Council about the Local Plan.

6. MATTERS ARISING

(a) Verge at Workhouse Road/The Street junction

The verge is owned by Gallagher who maintain it. Gallagher have confirmed they would very happy for the Parish Council to sow wildflower seeds on this verge. Cllrs Storey indicated that the Village Hall may have some spare seeds which can be used, and the Clerk will source more seeds.

(b) To consider Highways Improvement Plan

The Parish Council has agreed a number of measures, but these need to be approved by the community and a source of funding identified. Ryarsh Parish Council would like the first set of traffic calming islands nearest the school taken out, but Birling Parish Council does not agree, and the plan would need wider approval. The Parish Council has approached Cllr Hohler for funding towards a Vehicle Activated Sign on Birling Road but she does not have funding at present. Cllrs would like to consider installing a sign and either paying for it from the PC's budget or seeking funding after the County Council elections have taken place.

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- (c) Litter Picking in the Village
Cllr Martin will report on this at the next meeting, but litter picking groups cannot meet under the current restrictions.
- (d) KALC Community Awards Scheme
The Parish Council has not subscribed to take part in this year's awards.
- (e) LGA Model Code of Conduct
The Model Code was noted but there is no action to take at the moment.
- (f) New Parish Council Website
The Clerk is working on the website which should be live by the next meeting.

7. PARISH COUNCILLOR REPORTS

There were no reports.

8. MONTHLY CHECK LIST

- (a) General Data Protection Regulations
 - i. To consider next stage in Data Audit – Data Sharing
This will take place at an appropriate time in the future.
Councillors will complete and return their Own Device Questionnaire's to the Clerk.
- (b) To note any problems and receive reports about
 - i. Highways
There was flooding last week outside the school by the path to the Oast House. KCC attended quickly to clear, but Cllrs believe there is a blockage under the road so that water from the ditch cannot pass under the road to the other side. The Clerk will report this.
 - ii. Footpaths and Footways
It was noted that the footpath by the Oast House has been cleared.
The pavement outside Ryarsh Place, opposite the Village Hall, was cleared of leaves and debris by Wayne and Patrick Oliver. The Parish Council will write to extend their thanks on behalf of the village.
 - iii. Street lights
Cllr Storey reported a broken streetlight on The Street to the Parish Councils' contractor who repaired it promptly.
 - iv. Trees
Cllr Storey reported that there are logs stored outside the Village Hall which can be taken and used by anyone, although they will need to be cut to size.
- (c) Website
This had already been reported on.
- (d) Play Area and Recreation Ground
Cllr Storey is carrying out regular checks to the Play Area, which is hardly being used at the moment. Updates from Government are being carefully monitored to ensure the Parish Council is complying with the necessary requirements. There are no extra steps which we need to take at this present time.
- (e) Ryarsh Village Hall
There is nothing to report.

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9. FINANCIAL MATTERS

- (a) To receive bank statements, consider and approve financial statements (to be physically signed at the next available opportunity)

These have been circulated and considered by Cllrs. The statement was approved and will be signed by Cllr McKinlay at the next available opportunity.

- (b) To consider and approve invoice payments

The following payments were authorised by Cllrs Storey and Martin since the last meeting:

Payee	Description	Total £
M & D Nankivell	Donation - Christmas Tree	£200.00
Wrotham Computer Care	Laptop Anti Virus Protection	£16.13

The following invoices were APPROVED and the payments will be authorised by Cllrs Storey and Barton:

Payee	Description	Total £
PSR Lighting	Streetlight Maintenance December 2020	£116.40
Clerk	Jan 2021 Salary, expenses, allowance	£856.89
HMRC	Jan 2021 PAYE and NI	£66.65

A payment to Eon for Electricity for December 2020 of £131.81 will be paid by Direct Debit.

- (c) To consider and approve budget and precept request for 2020/21

There was a discussion about Parish Council finances. A budget of £49,320 was AGREED as follows:

Employment Costs	£12,950
Councillors Expenses	£300
Consumables – stationary, ink etc	£500
Insurance	£1,200
Burial Grounds – Grass Cutting	£1,200
Open Spaces – Recreation Ground Grass Cutting	£2,300
Open Spaces – Play Area	£10,630
Audit	£350
Professional Fees and Admin	£2,000
Highways Improvement Plan	£7,000
Streetlights	£3,400
Parish Property	£1,000
Contingency	£1,500
Donations	£350
Village Hall	£1,000
Training	£300
Subscriptions	£730
Total	£46,710

It was AGREED that there would be no increase in the precept for 2020/21 per Band D property, which would remain at £69.62. This would result in a precept of £25,755 which is £14 less than 2019/2020. The balance of the budget, being £20,955, will be funded from Parish Council reserves.

- (d) To consider any other financial matters
There were no other financial matters.

10. MATTERS FOR NEXT MEETING

There were no matters.

The Meeting concluded at 8.50pm

Date of the next Parish Council meeting is **Monday 8th February 2021**