



Minutes of Ryarsh Parish Council Meeting held in Ryarsh Church Hall on **Monday 12th February 2024** at 7.30pm

Councillors Present:

Cllr M McKinlay (Chairman)
Cllr J Sutton (Vice Chairman)
Cllr A Betts
Cllr C Bowyer
Cllr E Dennis
Cllr C Martin

Also in attendance:

Borough Councillor Banks (7.30–7.45pm), L Mackie (Clerk)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Payne and County Councillor Hohler. There were no declarations of interest.

2. MINUTES

To receive and approve the Minutes of the meeting held on **15th January 2024** for signature
It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 15th January 2024 be approved and signed as an accurate record by Cllr McKinlay.

3. EXTERNAL REPORTS:

(a) County Councillor Hohler

Cllr Hohler provided the following report:

- KCC continues to work hard to present a balanced budget for the next financial year which remains a challenge.
- The bus industry in Kent (as in most parts of the UK) remains privatised. Since the start of 2022 Government and other support has enabled KCC to protect around 50 school services that were at risk of withdrawal. These services continue to be funded using Government funding. The cost of these services is estimated at around £3m a year when accounting for the contribution made towards them from passenger revenue.
- These commitments have exhausted the funding available through Government, and KCC's own budgets for supporting bus services are also fully allocated. Unfortunately, we are starting to see bus service cancellations get presented to us again with no funding available. KCC are not in a position to protect them and if other possible operators do not view them as commercially sustainable then they will stop. These cancellations will include school buses.
- There has, during 2022, been a recovery of Kent's tourism and the hospitality sector which has meant more jobs and good news for Kent.
- The University of Kent, with a group of staff and student volunteers, have, during the autumn, collected 5,500 Kg of surplus fruit and vegetables from local farms and distributed them via FARESHARE UK to charities, food banks and community initiatives
- The Business Investment Team has been processing over 100 pre applications from small and medium sized businesses in Kent and Medway for grants from £26,000 to £600,000 to grow and innovate.

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Initials.....

- Hundreds of patients across Kent are now receiving care at home when they would normally have had to stay in hospitals thanks to Home First, the long awaited integration of health and social care, now in action.
- Childrens, services in Kent have recently been awarded an outstanding rating.
- The Port of Dover and the surrounding area could be hit by major disruption later this year when the EU Entry-Exit system launches. KCC has made the Government aware of their concerns and how it is likely to cause long traffic queues.
- Dog owners in Kent are being urged to keep control of their pets in the countryside, following a rise in attacks on sheep.
- Our trading standards officers have been working very hard to stop the huge imports of illegal vapes. KCC had asked the Government to ban them, which they have now done. However, they remain a problem as teenagers are attracted by their bright designs and different sweet and fruity, flavours.
- Potholes – KCC Highways have confirmed that pothole enquiries have been steadily rising over the past couple months. They are still aiming to repair within 28 days, however most locations where road widths do not allow adequate safety zones for the contractor Amey to deliver, they are looking at road closures. They estimate 60% of pothole jobs require more in-depth liaison and planning works before a gang has even attended to repair which will have an impact in keeping with the 28 day guarantee. This explains the overrun when a job is due for repair. Regarding technology, at present they are using the traditional methods i.e saw cut dig out and inlay which supports the tier 1 & 2 sub contractors Amey use to help deliver their works. Amey are completing more jobs than before.

(b) Borough Councillor Banks

- He has liaised with the Planning Officer about the Ryarsh Place Farm application. If she is minded to reject it she will produce a report, which would go to the Inspector if the applicant appeals the decision.
- He is working with Clarion about a property in Woodgate Road. They have given a third deadline of 19th February to deal with the fly tipping issue. He is copying in the TMBC Director Eleanor Hoyle. Social Housing is sub contracted by TMBC to Clarion, but TMBC have a statutory responsibility.
- Recent TMBC Agile Training dealt with issues being experienced by Parishes. This new system has not only affected planning, but also the Social Housing Lists.
- TMBC are doing better financially than other Councils in Kent. Officers are being prudent looking at car parking charges to raise revenue, but he does not believe it is needed at the moment and will object to this.
- He is aware of the problems people have in seeing a doctor. When we talk about planning, this issue must be raised – what are the facilities to serve the housing that should be included, such as schools, doctors etc. These are needed to support the housing. The Integrated Care Board (ICB) should be consulted and say they support the proposals.
- GP Surgeries are not part of the NHS, but are “semi detached” separate businesses.

(c) Fly Tipping

Cllr McKinlay noted that the Rural Police are working with TMBC to deal with fly tipping. TMBC are increasing fines for fly tipping.

(d) Police

There was no report.

4. **PLANNING**

(a) Plans Received for Comment

- i. **TM/23/03522 - Ryefields, Chapel Street** - Enlargement of existing ground floor side extension to enable provision of pitched roofs over that existing single storey addition and

a double storey flat roofed extension together with associated changes to fenestration to West (Rear) & South (Flank) elevations
There were **NO OBJECTIONS**.

- ii. **TM/23/03515 – Baptist Chapel, Chapel Street** - Change of use and conversion from Chapel to C3 (Dwelling) with side dormer and associated alterations
There were **NO OBJECTIONS** to the change of use and conversion in itself, but Cllrs were concerned about the car parking situation. Two spaces are included in the plans “underneath” a ramp. This will be costly, and difficult to use – Cllrs could not see how two cars could access and exit this space even if it were built, and the residents would have to park in Chapel Street. There was also a concern that the two spaces may not be built and the residents would just park in Chapel Street.
It must be essential that suitable off road parking is provided at the property. The building cannot be converted and then off road parking not provided.
- (b) Approvals
There were no approvals to report.
- (c) Refusals
There were no refusals to report.
- (d) TMBC Local Plan
There is no update.
- (e) Any other Planning Matters
To receive an update - **Land West of Roughetts Road** – Request for an Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Opinion to determine the information to be provided in an Environmental Statement to accompany a planning application for the proposed extraction of aggregate (sand) – KCC/SCO/TM/0140/2023 – www.landwestofroughettsroad.co.uk
There were no updates to report.

5. MATTERS ARISING

- (a) To consider replacing damaged street lights – Birling Road
There are three streetlights, one on each island. The contractor has indicated that due to vandalism, water is getting into the lantern and stopping the streetlight working. A quote of £450 VAT has been received to replace the lantern. Cllrs wanted a robust solution which matched existing lanterns. Cllrs **AGREED** to replace the one lantern that has been vandalised.
- (b) To receive update about Highways Improvement Plan and approve KCC Proposals
1. Roughetts Road – Safety and Speeding Concerns. Highways have suggested they will speak to the Operations Team to see if the signage on both sides of the road at the junction with the A20 be replaced or re-erected. They will look at refreshing the centre lines, and add new SLOW markings, to be co-located with existing warning signs. They will look at adding 40mph roundels by one of the middle repeaters. The Parish Council **APPROVED** these suggestions.
 2. Birling Road between Ryarsh Primary School and Birling – Speeding cars and danger to pedestrians and school children. Following Highways assessments, a VAS or SID is not suitable and there is not an underground electricity supply to power wig wags. The Planning and Advice Team can look to refresh the School Keep Clear Markings outside of the school. The school warning sign can be installed on a grey backed sign and they can add a SLOW marking on the carriageway to improve its visibility. At the Birling Road junction with Chapel Street as well as on the eastbound approach, there are warning signs to which Highways could also add SLOW markings. Cllrs **APPROVED** these proposals.

3. Birling Road Traffic Calming Island – Removal of the first traffic calming buildout adjacent to Place Farm Cottages, Bollards are difficult to see in the dark. The Parish Council have been asked to confirm if the Streetlight is working. The Parish Council has reported this to the contractor and it is now working, and the lantern is going to be replaced. Highways can speak to the Operation Team regarding the siding out and vegetation clearance to ensure there is full visibility of the priority sign and the buildout and to request that the lining is refreshed around the buildout. Highways state they cannot remove the build out due to cars parking irresponsibly when dropping off/picking up their children from the school. The Parish Council can contact the school regarding KCC Responsible Parking Campaign and School Travel Plan Initiatives. The Parish Council **APPROVED** these proposals.
4. Woodgate Road – Speeding cars. KCC have already installed a pedestrian warning sign and provided ATC results. There is no further update from KCC
5. The Street – the road narrows past Brookline Coaches and there is poor visibility of oncoming traffic which has resulted in conflict, damage only collisions and near misses. Highways have agreed they could look to add road narrow signs on Roughetts Road co-ordinated with the warning sign as well as look at the give way sign and co-located the bend warning on a grey backboard with a left arrow. On the eastbound approach, they can look to sign by the pub with a distance plate, co-located with a SLOW marking. Cllrs **APPROVED** these proposals.
6. Woodgate Road from junction with The Street to 3 Woodgate Road – sight lines to and from the junction blocked by parked cars in Woodgate Road. There is no further update.

A request will be made to refresh the double yellow lines at the bus stop.

- (c) To consider car parking on Birling Road between Birling and Ryarsh
This will be raised at the Birling Parish Council meeting. It was noted that vans park in this area when there is building work. As it is temporary it is not taken into account as part of planning.
- (d) To consider farm traffic
The farm has responded. Traffic was diverted due to flooding at Workhouse Lane and the farm was not made aware until after the event. They are working on some natural flood management proposals to see if they can find a way to reduce the number of occurrences, but this is currently subject to funding.
Regarding the Parish Council's proposed route along Stangate Road, the farm have noted that when the junction at Roughetts Road, Woodgate Road and Workhouse Lane was being altered, Highways advised that the design would be suitable for articulated lorries, 8-wheelers and other farm traffic. However, they do need to be able to use both routes in and out of the farm to be able to operate sensibly – both Workhouse Lane and Stangate Road.
The farm does regularly remind their contractors which routes to use, but often transport is subject to Satnav issues. The Parish Council should let the farm know at the time and they can pass the message on.
- (e) Pre-Submission Draft of the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2024-2039 – Regulation 19 Public Consultation (29.02.24)
There is nothing that will have an effect on Ryarsh.
- (f) To note Street Vote Development Orders Consultation -
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/street-vote-development-orders-consultation>
This was noted.
- (g) Parish Council Projects – Picnic Bench (Ryarsh Park), Notice Board
The Clerk is waiting for a response from Trinity.

The agreed bench needs oiling and treating. The Clerk will look at maintenance free options.

A resident has asked if the Notice Board on Birling Road can be repaired rather than replaced. Cllrs **AGREED** that given the condition of the Notice Board it is better to be replaced.

(h) D-Day 80 – 6th June 2024

The Parish Council has asked to present the KALC and Village Awards at the event.

(i) To approve change of date of July Meeting – Monday 29th July 2024

The change of date was agreed. Cllrs McKinlay, Sutton, Betts and Bowyer can attend.

6. OPEN SESSION – Public Question Time

There were no members of public present

7. PARISH COUNCILLOR REPORTS – to receive updates and reports

There were no reports.

8. MONTHLY CHECK LIST

To receive reports about:

(a) Play Area and Recreation Ground

The Clerk was asked to include a reminder in the newsletter that dogs are not allowed in the enclosed play area. Dogs are able to use the Recreation Ground

It was agreed that Cllr Betts will purchase and install some “grasscrete” by the gates to the play area to protect the ground and allow grass to grow through.

(b) Highways, Footpaths and Footways

There were no issues to report.

(c) Street lights

There were no issues to report.

(d) Village Hall

The Parish Council, as Landlord, contacted the Village Hall Trust with concerns about cameras installed inside the Village Hall. There are a number of legal requirements that must be complied with if cameras are installed and are recording, relating to Data Protection. The Trust have replied. They state that they have looked at current requirements and have registered with the Information Commissioners Office. Cllrs did not feel there was any further action they could take to make sure that all legal requirements are met.

UKPN have been in touch with the Village Hall about plans to route cables through the Recreation Ground. Cllr McKinlay was involved in a meeting with UKPN and the Village Hall in the past. The Parish Council did not consider it necessary to get involved in these discussions.

(e) Parish property: Defibrillator, Ryarsh Resource Room

The Village Hall Trust have been in contact about Defibrillator Checks and the Ryarsh Resource Room.

There were no issues to report.

Cllr McKinlay reported that a resident has said the grate in Woodgate Road needs clearing. The Clerk was asked to contact Guy Neville about this.

9. FINANCIAL MATTERS

Minutes of Ryarsh Parish Council Meeting

- (a) To receive bank statements, consider and approve financial statements for signature and to monitor budget

These have been circulated and considered by Councillors. The statement was approved and was signed by Cllr McKinlay
The Clerk has provided a financial report to Cllrs but there are no new issues to be raised.

- (b) To consider and approve invoice payments

The following accounts for payment were approved. The payments will be authorised by Cllrs Betts and Bowyer.

Payee	Description	Total
	Payments approved at the Meeting	
PSR Lighting	Streetlight Maintenance January 2024	£116.40
Commercial Services Trading Ltd	Recreation Ground Maintenance Oct-Dec 23	£448.61
Clerk	Salary February 2024	£943.94
HMRC	February 2024 PAYE and NI	£133.51
Clerk	Travel Expenses/Reimbursements Jan 24	£104.98

Payment to N Power for Electricity for January 2024 of £590.92 will be paid by Direct Debit.

- (c) To consider Un-metered Electricity Supply Renewal

A new contract with SSE, at a much better price, through Utility Aid, was noted.

- (d) To consider Donations 2023-2024

Cllrs will consider whether to make any donations for 2023-2024 at the next meeting.

- (e) To approve Internal Auditor 2023-2024

Cllrs **APPROVED** the reappointment of the existing Internal Auditor, Lionel Robbins. Cllrs can attend the Internal Audit with the Clerk.

- (f) To consider any other financial matters

Cllr Bowyer has been set up as a signatory with Unity Trust Bank.

Cllrs **AGREED** that a PO Box address be set up for the Clerk, for all Parish Council post to be sent to. This will be arranged through the Post Office, with any mail being delivered to the Clerk's home address. The cost is £396 per year (inc VAT)

10. MATTERS FOR NEXT MEETING

There were no matters raised.

The Meeting concluded at 8.30pm

Date of the next Parish Council Meeting is **Monday 11th March 2024** at 7.30pm in Ryarsh Church Hall.

Signed *W McKinlay*

Dated *11-3-24*