



Minutes of Ryarth Parish Council Meeting held in Ryarth Church Hall on Monday 9th December 2024 at 7.30pm

Councillors Present:

Cllr M McKinlay (Chairman)
Cllr A Betts
Cllr C Bowyer
Cllr E Dennis
Cllr S Payne

Also in attendance:

Borough Councillor Banks (left at 8.15pm), 7 members of public, L Mackie (Clerk)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Sutton and Martin and County Councillor Hohler. There were no declarations of interest.

2. MINUTES: To receive and approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 11th November 2024 for signature

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 11th November be approved and signed as an accurate record by Cllr McKinlay.

3. EXTERNAL REPORTS:

(a) County Councillor Hohler
There was no report.

(b) Borough Councillor Banks
Cllr Banks reported:

- The recent Area 2 Planning Committee 2 has been busy with a meeting concerning an East Malling Application, not only starting early and finishing late, but also needing a 2nd session because a lot of people wanted to speak. The application covers land in Green Belt. The prior month there was an application for another 50 houses in East Malling. Cllr Banks maintains his position, which is about the infrastructure needed to go with extra housing.
- There is an argument about the Council's consultation of the Integrated Care Board (ICB) and local surgeries. There is no point talking to the ICB who are the commissioning Board for GP's, if the ICB does not talk to the surgeries. Our local GP in West Malling is complaining they are overwhelmed by two new care homes.
- Research is being done into water quality as it is a national issue and the quality of Leybourne Stream has been checked. There used to be fish living in the stream. Now, it is very clear and passes the clarity test, but it has phosphates and nitrates present so it is a clear "dead" stream. Somewhere something is leaking into it.
- Callis Court Farm planning – last time this came up, there was an issue regarding the change of use from agricultural. Now the application is to change from agriculture to equestrian, and there is talk about a new access.
- There was a discussion about the new care home being built at the back of Parkfoot Garage. Cllr McKinlay reported that access to the site is dreadful, and the mess along the road is disgraceful. Cllr Banks reported that road sweepers are regularly

going along here, which is disturbing neighbours. The area borders West Malling and Leybourne parishes. He will mention this issue to them both.

(c) Police

There was no report.

(d) Village Hall

David S introduced himself to the meeting on behalf of the Village Hall.

4. **PLANNING**

(a) Plans Received for Comment

i. **24/01713/PA - Land West of Callis Court Farm, London Road** - Creation of a new accessway, erection of timber stable building, change of use of land to equestrian use and the erection of equestrian fencing. (16.12.24)

The Parish Council heard from neighbours to the property and their representative:

- One neighbour has farmed this land for over 30 years.
- The road floods regularly. It takes water from the A20 down into Sandy Lane to a low spot where it has nowhere else to go. Vehicles create a tidal wave and water splashes to the lowest point in the field. This creates floods in the field and the road.
- Sheep have been kept on the land and he has made a living from it
- He has always paid rent on it
- The land is Metropolitan Green Belt
- This is not a change of use. Horses were kept on this field for many years. The use is already equestrian and agriculture and it does not need a planning application to achieve that.
- If there was a new planning consent granted, it would destroy the tenancy held by the neighbour. He has tenancy under the Agricultural Holdings Act 1981. He and two successive generations have the right to continue using that land. If this application is approved it will destroy his right and the protection he has under the Agricultural Holdings Act.
- TMBC claimed this is a civil matter, but it is not. They would be destroying his tenancy and the 100 years' worth of compensation he would be entitled to.
- The creation of the new roadway is relevant. The Agent states that the planner recommended access onto Sandy Lane, which is narrow and floods, and is on top of a manhole with a pipe that runs across that line of access.
- There is no concern for horses using the field, as they have done for decades, but there is concern about horse vehicles turning into and out of access at this point, blocking the lane where there are no passing points, and displacing floodwater into the neighbouring fields
- It was suggested that access would better onto the A20 London Road. Some work would be needed to lift the level of the field up to the road, but the verge on the A20 is much wider (7-8m) whereas the verge on Sandy Lane is not.
- If access was onto Sandy Lane, the gate would need to be locked afterwards. Vehicles will stop in the land blocking it, to get out and lock the gate. It is a single lane with no passing bays
- It was reported that there have been several accidents in Sandy Lane, one just recently with a person injured.

Cllrs **RESOLVED** to **OBJECT** to the application and supported the objections made by the neighbours.

(b) Approvals

There were no approvals to report.

(c) Refusals

There were no refusals to report.

- (d) Any other Planning Matters
24/01645/PA – Sandbanks, East Street, Addington - Proposed two storey side and rear extension to include integral garage. No Objections were submitted to this.

5. MATTERS ARISING

- (a) To consider KALC Community Awards and Ryarsh Village Awards 2025
It was **RESOLVED** the Parish Council would like to take part again this year. A request for nominations will be circulated.
- (b) To consider Fire Hydrant Inspections
Cllr Betts and Sutton will meet to inspect. A lost hydrant has been located.
- (c) To consider maintenance to streetlights
The Clerk is liaising with the contractor about a shade for the light outside Brook Cottages. It was reported that a bulb on The Street by the footpath near Brookline Coaches needs replacing.
- (d) To consider Parish Council Projects – Ryarsh Resource Room
David and Ba S addressed the meeting. He and Ba have looked after the resource Room for 7 years. Sadly, rubbish is being dumped in it, including old trainers, lampshades and a duvet. They have now arranged for a local volunteer who works with them in the library in the Village Hall to help, and she is checking it every day. They would prefer that this lady stays helping and checking the Resource Room daily.
There was a discussion about whether the Resource Room was being used for the right things, and whether the school could get involved in changing its use.
It was agreed that a note would be put into the newsletter, expressing concern at the amount of effort being put into looking after the Resource Room, only to find rubbish is being dumped in there.
- (e) To note renewal of Data Protection Certificate with Information Commissioners Office
Noted.

6. OPEN SESSION – Public Question Time

- A resident thanked the Parish Council for reaching out to the community to encourage greater engagement with the Village Hall. It was mentioned that the Trust Deed for the Village Hall states that members of the community can attend the AGM. The Village Hall was encouraged to engage with villagers.
- David S reported that they had taken advice from Action With Communities in Rural Kent. The Village Hall believe it is a closed Trust, run by Trustees and decisions are made in house. He said that does not preclude people coming to meetings.
- David said the Village Hall would like more support.
- Cllr McKinlay said Councillors agreed that David and Ba need more support and help for all the things they do for the Village Hall. There are villagers who would like to get involved which is good. The Parish Council can publicise the AGM and encourage those people to attend and offer help.
- David reported that the Hall is at capacity and their funds are good. They work very hard and the hall is important to the village

7. PARISH COUNCILLOR REPORTS – to receive updates and reports

- (a) KALC – Clerk’s Conference – 12.11.24 (LM)
The Clerk attended and has circulated notes and slides.
- (b) KALC – Introduction to Planning for Local Councils – 14.11.24 (CB)
Cllr Bowyer attended and has circulated notes.

- (c) KCC Highways Conference – 20.11.24 (MM, LM)
Cllr McKinlay and the Clerk attended the Conference which is the first held face to face since covid, and allowed the opportunity to meet the people who work on our area. Notes and slides have been circulated. Cllr McKinlay commented on how keen Highways staff were on meeting parishes, and how they wanted to co-operate.
- (d) TMBC Parish Partnership Panel – 21.11.24
Cllr McKinlay was unable to attend.
- (e) Play Area Annual Inspection – 27.11.24 (MM, AB)
Cllrs McKinlay and Betts met with the Inspector. There is nothing serious at the moment that needs immediately dealing with, although equipment is getting old. There is an issue with moles which can be dealt with by "suitable means"
The Inspector has confirmed that Cllr Betts can mend the rope bridge with no liability issues as this is basic maintenance work.
Cllr Payne raised a question about a tree which leans. Children climb up it but if they fall they will land on the fence. Cllrs will take a look and consider if work needs to be done to prevent children from climbing the tree and risking injury.
Cllr Betts noted there is mould and algae which need cleaning off in the Spring.
- (f) KALC AGM 30.11.24 (MM)
Cllr McKinlay was unable to attend.
- (g) Christmas Tree Lighting 01.12.24
This was a terrific effort by everyone in village with carol singing, lighting of the tree and mulled wine. There was a collection for the tree which raised £460.
- (h) KALC - Clerks Networking Event 05.12.24 (Clerk)
The Clerk was unable to attend.

8. MONTHLY CHECK LIST

To receive reports about:

- (a) Play Area and Recreation Ground
The report will be circulated when it is received.
- (b) Highways, Footpaths and Footways, Street lights
The Clerk was asked to contact TMBC to ask them to clear the footpath by the school which is covered in leaves.
It was reported that a tree has fallen on the footpath behind the Street. Cllrs will check if it has been removed. It can be reported to Kent Public Rights of Way Office.
It was noted that a new bin has been installed on the Workhouse Road footpath and has been placed higher up.
- (c) Parish property: Defibrillator, Ryarsh Resource Room
David S reported that he is waiting for a date to be set up for further defibrillator training. The Clerk noted that the Parish Council has never received a report about the defibrillator checks. David said a cardiac nurse strips it down and checks it every two weeks.

9. FINANCIAL MATTERS

- (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 for Cllrs and there are no issues to be raised.
- (b) To consider and approve invoice payments

Minutes of Ryarsh Parish Council Meeting

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

Payee	Description	Total
	Payments Approved at the last meeting	£2,142.70
	Payments approved since the last meeting	
SSE Energy	Electricity Supply October 24	£37.64
SSE Energy	Electricity Supply October 24	£248.40
ICO	Data Protection Fee	£35.00
Unity Trust	Monthly Service Charge	£6.00
	TOTAL NOVEMBER PAYMENTS	£2,469.74
	Payments approved at the Meeting	
PSR Lighting	Streetlight Maintenance November 2024	£116.40
Wrotham Computer Care	Antivirus for 2 years	£38.71
L Barton	Wreath for Remembrance Service	£25.00
Forvis Mazars	External Audit AGAR 2023-2024	£252.00
Viking	Office Supplies	£82.92
Clerk	Salary December 2024	£863.80
HMRC	December 2024 PAYE and NI	£166.18
Clerk	Travel Expenses/Reimbursements	£95.10
	TOTAL DECEMBER PAYMENTS	£1,640.11

There was no transfer between the Instant Access Savings Account and the Current Account.

- (c) To note consideration and approval of budget and precept request at the January meeting
This will be discussed at the next meeting.

10. MATTERS FOR NEXT MEETING

There were no matters raised.

The Meeting concluded at 8.15pm

Date of the next meeting at Ryarsh Church Hall: Monday 13th January 2025

Signed 

Dated 13-1-25