

RIVERHEAD PARISH COUNCIL
March Minutes 2023

Meeting of the Riverhead Parish Council held at 19.30 hours on Monday 20th March 2023.

1. PRESENT:

Mrs Collins (Chairman), Mrs Kennett (Vice-Chairman), Mrs King (Vice Chairman), Mr Colnet, Mr Croucher, Mr Smith and Mrs Stewart.

Also present: Mrs Estefani (Clerk), Cllr Kim Bayley SDC, Cllr Graham Clack STC, Mr Trevor Harrison and Mr Stuart Helmer.

Apologies accepted: none

Not present: Cllr Brown SDC and Cllr Chard KCC

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of Interest declared.

Nobody aware of any breaches of GDPR.

3. MINUTES:

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 20th February 2023 had previously been circulated and were approved and signed.

4. Reports from District/County Councillors

Cllr Bayley reported about Sencio going into administration for incapacity to repay its debts. SDC is committed to re-open the facilities as soon as possible.

Cllr Clack informed that he has asked Cllr Chard at KCC to look at the lighting at the zebra crossings in Riverhead.

5. MATTERS FOR REPORT

a. Action points outstanding since previous meeting

- Trevor Harrison addressed the Council at the last meeting and raised some questions regarding the “worsening traffic situation in Chipstead Lane” for the Council to review and respond at this meeting;

- To whom have the Council relayed their concerns about the traffic problems in Chipstead Lane (CL)?

We have been in contact with SDC, KCC Cllr Nick Chard, SDC Cllr Kim Bayley and with residents of Chipstead Lane (CL).

- Has the Council considered and evaluated the earlier proposal from KCC Highways for Chipstead lane to be access only?

The council has and will evaluate any workable suggestion that is agreed with KCC and is in the best interest of Riverhead residents. In 2020 RPC included CL at the top of their yearly HIP.

- Has this Council spoken to Otford PC about how they were able to help their parishioners given that both councils are at the same level in the Local Authority hierarchy? Different situation, not applicable. RPC has own process.

Cllr Collins reported that she had a chat with Irene Roy, Chairman of Otford PC, who led the 20's campaign in Otford. Cllr Roy confirmed that it was a whole village approach. I.e. the PC devised a simple survey which was sent out electronically, was available in the PC office and in local shops, and this made it accessible to all members of the community.

They had a very good take up and a good majority of positive feedback for the scheme.

Only then they went on to the next stage.

If residents wish us to be more involved as Otford PC were in their project, we would have to involve all Riverhead not just Chipstead Lane.

- Does this Council realise that the original KCC proposal would actually cost next to nothing and could easily be afforded by our local community?

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RPC has not had the costings from KCC so they cannot comment on this point.

Cllr Stewart indicated that the problem in CL is a very serious and dangerous situation for the residents in the lane but not necessarily seen that way by neighbouring adjacent roads. The safety of people living in Chipstead Lane including risks to life and property (i.e. walls and parked vehicles) should take priority over opposing arguments which just express preferences as convenience and shorter journeys.

All councillors are invited to share their views on the safety issues in Chipstead lane. As a conclusion, the Chairman Cllr Collins suggested to set a meeting with Cllr Bayley SDC, Cllr Clack SDC, and Cllr Chard KCC and invite representatives from the different areas of Riverhead involved to take forward CL as safety issue and to bring forward a proposal to the Joint Transportation Board (JBT).

b. Highways

- CK shared a letter from Emily, a 12 year old resident that has expressed her concern about the dangerous zebra crossing in Worship Hill.
- The council discussed the terrible accident that took place on Thursday at the zebra crossing outside Londis. Mara has received another email regarding another two incidents that took place in the same crossing. Email had been shared with all Cllrs.
- The council evaluated the options and decided to add these two crossings to the HIP requesting better illumination. The council also discussed the possibility to use CIL funds to add illuminated poles to improve visibility and to apply to the CIL Board if necessary.
- As a consequence of the accident, the planter is broken and needs replacing. CK confirmed that there are three stored in the loft. The planter has now been cleared from the road.
- Invoice from EON – Npower for February for a total £1,104.91 has been received. Metering charges are still showing in the bill. CC agreed to have a look and contact EON at the last meeting. CC reported that after speaking to EON the bill is correct and the average rate will even out when the Summer hours help reduce the consumption time.
- The purchase of Street signs for Church Field and Witches Lane have been ordered as well as new finials the Hamlin Road's street sign. will be repainted.
- SS informed the council that she has requested a meeting with KCC Vision 0 regarding the soft landscaping of the roundabouts and central reservation, and its maintenance.
- AC reported the broken railing outside the hairdresser.

Street lights

- A resident has reported that the light outside 82 Marlborough Crescent has not been working for the last 6 weeks. JK to check and report back.
- Nothing else to report on street lights.

Footpaths and pavements

- Cllr Clack reported that the path in Church Field is very dark.

Street furniture

- Mike Payton has been asked to install three new bollards opposite Oakwood Beauty.

Traffic and local parking

- Nothing else to report.

Local business and services:

- E-Watch reports:

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- Bullfinch Lane in Riverhead: On Wednesday 15th of February around 11:30. Somebody broke into a residential property. The owner is still to provide a list of stolen items, if any. Crime Report No. 46/29094/23
- Chipstead Lane in Riverhead: Between 00:01 on Wednesday 15th of February and 10:14 on Wednesday 22nd of February. Somebody stole a cycling helmet and damaged a bicycle apparently trying to steal it. Crime Report No. 46/36179/23
- Amherst Hill in Riverhead: On Thursday 23rd of February between 14:45 and 15:00. A family dined at a restaurant and left without paying. Crime Report No. 46/36976/23
- London Road in Riverhead: On Friday 24th of February around 17:35. Somebody stole a mobile phone from an employee in an estate agent while distracting them by asking for a job. Crime Report No. 46/37410/23
- London Road in Riverhead: On Thursday 2nd of March around 10:56. A man deceived a user at an ATM and stole cash by withdrawing it from their account. Crime Report No. 46/41332/23

c. Village Hall

- Safety Checks – Safety Log Book – AC confirmed all done.
- IC thanked AC for fixing the faulty lock of the main entrance door, the kitchen shutter and changing the light bulb. Michele reported that the shutter is unhinged again and that the front door seemed to have been forced as there is a big crack in the wooden left panel of the door which she thinks is how the door can be opened even when it is locked. AC has secured the door with a panel for now, but the Village Hall team (VH) needs to look into ordering a new door. AC confirmed that the same lock can be used in the door so there will be no need to replace keys. SS suggested that the council looks into the insurance to see if there is cover for this. The clerk has sent a copy of the insurance to VH.
- Little Mill has finally confirmed their appointment to fix the broken window for Thursday 30th March. AC will be available to supervise the works if needed.
- VH will arrange meeting to discuss re-decorating needs for the hall in the Summer. VH to let Mara know asap so she can block bookings and book Toni if needed.
- Nothing else to report on Village Hall.

d. Parkland

- No updates from the last working party.
- JK has found a storage container for £309.00. Parkland agreed to go ahead and Mara will order it before 31st March.
- No other issues to report or questions on Parkland.

e. Allotments & Open Spaces

- DMB lease was reviewed by CC and changes agreed. However, they got back requesting we provide them with a Base RPI Month and Base Rent definitions. CC to help define this and Mara to send comments to DMB.
- There are some empty allotments (Broadmead: 2, 5, 9A, 17, 19A). Three plots have still not been paid for this year (B19B and M6A). Holders have been chased by email and voicemails. These allotments have now been added to the list to be offered out.
- It was agreed at the last meeting that the council would decide on whether CJS would take over the planting and care of the troughs on the central reservation. SS mentioned the conversation she had with a representative of the landscaping team at KCC Highways at a recent Highways seminar. She has requested a site visit to see what they may offer RPC in terms of planting / trees / landscaping, in particular the central reservation and roundabouts. It was agreed it would be beneficial to wait and

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as it could fund and maintain some substantial planting for the parish. SS to report back what KCC decides.

- Alex has been working on the new gate in Church Field. CK has checked with residents and most agreed it looks good and it doesn't need painting. Council agreed to leave it as it is for now.
- No further issues or questions on Open Spaces.

f. Communications

- The Coronation Party: It was discussed whether there was need to buy a new Gazebo for the party. The council decided it will benefit having one to use in future events. Parkland funds to be used as they have a surplus which could be used for the purchase .JK to find a suitable one and Mara to order.
- Nothing else to report or questions on Comms.

6. NOTIFIED ITEM

Motion to change Standing Orders (5.f. February 2019) to allow Chairman to keep the position for more than 5 years consecutively.

Cllr Chris Kennett nominated. Cllr Alan Colnet seconded. All by show of hands.

7. FINANCE COMMITTEE

a) Review and approve invoices for payment.

- List of payments over £500: none
- A list of payments had previously been distributed.

b) Total Income received £4,203.93 since last meeting, this included £1979.61 in VAT refunds.

The list of receipts had previously been distributed.

- Any outstanding projects or items to be completed in this year's budget before the 31st March 2023. Unspent funds will go to Reserves and they will be allocated to new projects in 2023-24 at full council.

c) No further issues to report or questions on Finance.

8. PLANNING COMMITTEE

- Planning application reviewed in the month was:
- 23/00364/HOUSE – Westbourne Montreal Road, Riverhead TN13 2EP

9. CORRESPONDENCE

- A list of general correspondence was distributed in the meeting room.

10. CLERK'S OFFICE

- The potential Annual Parish Meeting date was agreed for the 18th May 2023.
- A reminder that the next Council meeting is taking place on Monday 24th April 2023.

The meeting closed at 21.20pm