

# RIVERHEAD PARISH COUNCIL

## July Minutes 2023

Meeting of the Riverhead Parish Council held at 19.30 hours on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

### **1. PRESENT:**

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

**Also present:** Mrs Estefani (Clerk), PC Peter Wilson, and Trevor Harrison (Riverhead resident).

**Apologies accepted:** Cllr Bayley SDC, Cllr Graham Clack SDC, and Cllr Chard KCC.

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- No declarations of Interest.
- Nobody aware of any breaches of GDPR.

### **3. MINUTES:**

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2023 had previously been circulated and were approved and signed.

### **4. Reports from District/County Councillors**

None

### **5. Kent POLICE - Introduction from PC Peter Wilson.**

PC Peter Wilson introduced himself to the council. He reported that Riverhead has a low level of crime overall.

Main area for concern at the moment is around the River Darent boundary with Dunton Green where youngsters are gathering, vandalising the fence, littering and causing disturbance. He foresees less issues as the new development increases the number of residents in the area with many windows overlooking the area which will lessen the chance of youngsters performing anti-social activities unseen. He recommends the landlord installs a new fence in the hope it will stop the youngsters gathering there.

### **6. MATTERS FOR REPORT**

#### **a. Action points outstanding from previous meeting:**

- Questions from Trevor Harrison's letter to be addressed by the council:  
*'I would like the Parish Council to clarify for me and other interested parties, the Council's current position on the traffic and safety issues that have been raised concerning Chipstead Lane, and the well thought out cost effective proposal from KCC Highways Department engineers.'*

The chairman stated that Riverhead Parish Council (RPC) remains committed to help find and deliver a safety plan to ensure the safety both of residents, pedestrians and road users in Chipstead Lane. A good deal of work has been done liaising with SDC and KCC members as well as Highways Officers at KCC. RPC has facilitated a discussion forum to ascertain what the residents require and the best way to get it done. RPC councillors were deeply disappointed and frustrated by the postponement of the meeting where KCC officers were due to present their findings. Without the presence of the said officers to answer technical aspects the meeting was postponed. Kim, Graham and Irene have met and communicated several times to discuss how best to take this forward and have been in direct contact with the KCC officers to reschedule the meeting.

The officers should be in a position to give the results of the studies they are undertaking and how the information has been used to draw up workable possibilities.

*Has the Council completed its evaluation of this plan and if so what is stopping them from giving the plan their full backing?*

The chairman explained that having been in touch with Witney to check the matter of how far the previously prepared drawing (2122-EXT-SE-25/01) which proposed a reversal of the existing one-way on Chipstead Lane and a prohibition of motor vehicles went the answer was that *"working with local stakeholders, including the Parish Council and County Member Nick*

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*Chard, KCC previously prepared a drawing (2122-EXT-SE-25/01) which proposed a reversal of the existing one-way on Chipstead Lane and a prohibition of motor vehicles. The drawing was produced for an informal consultation in order to gauge the level of local support for such a scheme. The results of the consultation indicated that whilst many residents of Chipstead Lane supported the proposals (or at least elements of them), the wider community including adjacent roads were not in favour. The plans were subsequently never progressed to a formal consultation.*

*We are aware that a prohibition of motor vehicles is still an aspiration for some, but this is not something which KCC can commit to taking forward to formal consultation at the current time. We are however awaiting the results of some independent traffic surveys which will give us a better understanding of the potential impact of such a scheme on the wider area, including any likely vehicle displacement / capacity issues at impacted local junctions etc.”*

Therefore, until RPC are presented with what KCC Highways officers are now offering, the council has nothing concrete to back.

#### **b. Highways**

- Highways sub-committee to set up a meeting and send Mara the minutes from previous meeting to update new chair and members.

#### **Street lights**

- SS updated about the missing lamp post in Shoreham Lane and confirmed that after inquiring with SDC and Ken Bonner from Streetlights; the lamp was situated in the boundary between SDC and RPC, it appears the lamp itself belonged to SDC but it was under RPC maintenance contract. Streetlights confirmed a replacement would be around 2.5K.
- Nothing else to report on street lights.

#### **Footpaths and pavements**

- Nothing to report.

#### **Street furniture**

- Mara contacted Signs of the Times regarding the missing two small ball finials. They were delivered last week and are now in the office. Alan has confirmed he will collect them and install them.
- CK informed the council that CJS Plants are having difficulties with stock as the lack of rain has affected most of their sites and these will need replacing, they will try their best to gather as many plants as they can (around 50 approx..) for the planters they agreed to supply. Chris might have to buy the plants from Coblands if not.
- Nothing else to report on street furniture.

#### **Traffic and local parking**

- The parking bays at St Marys Church allocated for RPC have faded and people are using our three parking and claiming they couldn't see any restrictions. Alan to ask Toni to repaint the white lines and PC markings while he is working at the hall over the Summer.

#### **Local business and services:**

- The new Vape Shop opening has raised many residents' complaints and concerns in the community. The councillors concluded that there isn't anything they can do as there are no restrictions on vape shops other than it needing to be a retail unit. Neither Riverhead Parish Council or Sevenoaks District Council have a say in this type of business set-up. The only responsibility that the council has is to ensure that the retailer is not selling unsafe illegal products and that they are not selling them to under 18s.

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- E-Watch reports:
  - London Road in Riverhead - On Saturday 24th of June around 20:39. Somebody stole a mobile phone from a table in a coffee shop. Crime Report No. 46/116125/23
- A resident has reported anti- social behaviour by youngsters in the area between Blackmead and the River Darent. Groups are gathering at weekends and in the evenings and they have vandalised the fencing along the river, they are noisy and leave rubbish. The police are aware of this. The land is managed by Nick Faulkner. Something needs to be done to discourage this activity. SDC Councillors have been contacted regarding the matter.

#### c. Village Hall

- **Safety Checks** – Alan confirmed all done.
- The Preschool and regular hirers fees have been kept at very low rates for a number of years now. Since the increase in electricity charges, hire fees should be reviewed for Winter 2023. Preschool has a flat rate of £50.00 per day. Regular hirers currently pay £16.00 per hour. New agreements charge £17 p/h. SS to check with nearby halls and compare prices. VH to discuss at their next sub-committee meeting and report back.
- Village Hall decided that the contribution towards the damaged floor by a regular hirer should be £200 – a 25% contribution of the total cost for re-lacquering the floor. VH agreed to allow the regular hirer to continue their tap classes but to not allow examinations to take place in the hall in the future. Mara to inform hirer of the decision and to request that they check the tap shoes of each dancer before their lessons.
- DH&SC: Defibrillator Fund is available, and councillors have been informed of the application process. VH to discuss if a second unit would be beneficial as current defibrillator is dated, replacement pads for adults are usually out of stock and the infant pads are discontinued permanently so they cannot be replaced.
- The notice board broke and it cannot be used at the moment. Alan confirmed it cannot be fixed as fixings are too thick and wood completely rotten. Prices for a new one range from £1,200 onwards. VH to meet and discuss options.
- British Gas Lite new contract for the village hall electricity is at the agreed rates that was accepted at the June meeting.
- The clock in the main hall is very small. Alan to replace it with the one in the office.
- Nothing else on Village Hall.

#### d. Parkland

- Sevenoaks Town East to West Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Route. LCWIP. Residents have expressed numerous concerns and objections against the new cycle path route. Until we have feedback from the survey which has just been run it is difficult to debate but councillors agreed to give it consideration and share observations in due course.
- Phil volunteered to cut brambles and tidy areas in the Parkland. Mara to cancel quoted works by Vikings and save £700 of Parkland budget.
- The last working party cut back overgrown paths, and area around orchard and apple trees.
- Janice and Shirley to look at options of kissing gates accessible for mobility scooters, and other buggies/prams and to ask Darryl for a quote to install.
- No other issues to report or questions on the Parkland.

#### e. Allotments & Open Spaces

- No news from DMB. Mara chased them. No update.
- Mara reported litter bin/dog waste in path alongside Broadmead Allotments to SDC. Case reference is SC/832.
- JK to ask Darryl for quote to install new fencing.

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- No further issues or questions on Open Spaces.

#### **f. Communications**

- Community Survey – Communications sub-committee to arrange meeting and put something together to discuss at full council in September.
- RPC Branding - Shirley to send colour samples. A vibrant green shade was agreed to be a favourable option.
- 80 D-Day Celebration set for the 8<sup>th</sup> June 12noon-4pm. It was agreed that reusing all decorations from Coronation as well as left over materials (e.g. face paints, pens, arts and crafts, etc) to keep costs down. Only need for a small budget for the band and portaloos hire. Janice and Shirley to book a Fish and Chip Van, Red Pizza Van, Ice cream van and to suggest to Scouts to run tea/coffee and cakes stall.
- Communications sub-committee to look at how RPC contacts residents eg updating residents groups, finding out who is admin on the various WhatsApp groups, etc.
- Positive meeting between Amherst School and the Finance Committee.
- Nothing to report or questions on Comms.

#### **7. NOTIFIED ITEMS**

a) **To review and approve payments from budget to the following charities which will bring direct benefit to Riverhead and its inhabitants LGA 1972 s137**

£1,400 in the budget for donations made under the section 137 power

- Full list of usual donations was sent to all Cllrs for their review and are as below:
  - Hospice in the Weald £100
  - Royal British Legion £100 (for Remembrance Sunday wreath & donation).
  - Kenward Trust £100
  - West Kent Mediation Services £100
  - Citizens Advice Bureau Sevenoaks £100
  - Air Ambulance Kent Surrey Sussex £200
  - Sevenoaks and District Samaritans £100
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Sevenoaks Scout Group £100
  - Sevenoaks Volunteer Transport Group £100
  - Sevenoaks Community First Responders £100
  - West Kent Mind £125
  - Others £175
- I propose to donate £1,400 to the published list of charities, seconded by Cllr Chris Kennett. All by *Show of hands*.

b) **Discussion to start process to fund partially or fully Riverhead Infant School Forest School Project:**

- Phil proposes to fund this project, costings below;
  - £3,840 for initial clearance and preparation of the site.
  - £6,500 for the erection of fencing on three sides of the existing site.
  - Total to get the basic forest school provision in place would be £10,340.

Mara is looking into how and if we could fund it. As soon as we have the information we can take it further.

#### **8. FINANCE COMMITTEE**

a. Review and approval of invoices for payment.

- List of payments over £500:
  - Zurich Insurance Total £2,369.87.
  - SSE SWALEC Total £1,499.24 for hall electricity.
  - CJS Plants Total £1680 for planting and watering central reservation (July-Sept 2023).

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- Streetlights Total £722.50 for quarterly maintenance.

The list of payments has previously been distributed.

- Total Income received since last meeting £5,893.31. Including £2,101.81 in VAT refunds, £500 from SDC Community Grant And £1320 from Kent Association Cost of Living Grant.

The list of receipts has previously been distributed.

- The annual Return 2022-23 and required documents were sent on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June. Notice of public rights was published and is active from the 23<sup>rd</sup> June to the 4<sup>th</sup> August.
- The Finance Committee agreed to meet on the 18<sup>th</sup> August at 3.00pm to go through 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the budget. A copy is available today if anyone would like to review the expenditure of each committee and sub-committee this first quarter.

b. SDC Community Grant. Finance to look at this at their next meeting and report back.

c. UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Finance to look at this at their next meeting and report back.

- No further issues to report or questions on Finance.

#### **8. PLANNING COMMITTEE**

• Planning applications reviewed in the month were:

- 23/01499/HOUSE – The Dolls House 62 Chipstead Lane Riverhead TN13
- KCC/SE/0079/2023 - Riverhead Infants School, Worships Hill, Riverhead TN13 2AS
- 23/01716/HOUSE - 8 Shoreham Lane Riverhead Sevenoaks Kent TN13 3DT
- 23/01451/HOUSE - 10 Uplands Close Riverhead Sevenoaks Kent TN13 3BP
- 23/01294/HOUSE - 11 The Close Riverhead Sevenoaks Kent TN13 2HE
- 23/01712/HOUSE - 12 The Close Riverhead Sevenoaks Kent TN13 2HE

#### **9. CORRESPONDENCE**

A list of general correspondence has been distributed in the meeting room.

#### **10. CLERK'S OFFICE**

Risk assessments and Terms of reference should all have been reviewed and signed by each committee and sub-committee.

The meeting closed at 21.55pm