

Tunstall Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on virtually on
Monday 1 February 2021

Present: Cllr Mavis Hibben (Chair), Cllr Lee Burgess, Cllr Vivien Rich, Cllr Louisa Roberts and Cllr Sarah Stephen: and Mrs W Licence (Clerk).

Also present were County Councillor Andrew Bowles, County Councillor John Wright and one member of the public

Cllr Hibben welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. COUNCILLOR VACANCY

Cllr Hibben reported that no applications had received yet. The vacancies have been advertised in the February Church magazine and will go into the March edition.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

All Members were present.

Apologies had been received from Ward Member Monique Bonney; apology noted.

Kent County Councillor Andrew Bowles had notified the Clerk that he would be late to the meeting as he was at another meeting.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Burgess declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 10.ii.

Cllr Roberts declared a pecuniary interest in 10.iii as her house is mentioned in the Heritage Statement.

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 DECEMBER 2020

Cllr Hibben said the minutes had not been signed off in January because of Councillors flagging up a possible omission. No amendments could be made due to a Locum Clerk standing in; therefore, the minutes were being presented again.

The Clerk said the minutes of a meeting have to include attendance, apologies, any declarations of interest and a record of the decisions made. The Clerk is responsible for the minutes and Councillors could correct any error. The draft minutes of the January meeting state that Members agreed that the minutes were correct and mentioned an omission. The minutes are not verbatim but are a record of what is legally required and the draft minutes satisfy the legal requirement.

Cllr Roberts said that she disputed that and that the minutes did not reflect the decisions made. The Clerk asked which resolution was reflected incorrectly.

Cllr Roberts said there had been lengthy discussions on some items.

The Clerk said that lengthy discussions are not recorded and the minutes not verbatim.

Cllr Roberts said that the sentences that she wanted added were very short.

The Clerk said that this had been part of the discussion and Cllr Roberts' opinion on those matters, this is not the same as a resolution. The opinions of every Councillor cannot be included in the minutes.

Cllr Rich said that although she was not at that meeting, perhaps the minutes could have an addendum of the notes Cllr Roberts wants to be included.

The Clerk said that minutes do not have an addendum.

Cllr Roberts said that under Standing Orders section 11d, the Chair can add a statement to the minutes or another option is that she (*Cllr Roberts*) could move a motion to correct an inaccuracy or an addendum can be added as Cllr Rich had suggested.

The Clerk asked Cllr Roberts for clarification of the inaccuracy as she had understood that Cllr Roberts had wanted her opinion included in the minutes.

Cllr Burgess **PROPOSED** to accept the minutes of 7 December as a true record; **SECONDED** by Cllr Hibben: **FOR- 2** Cllr Hibben and Cllr Burgess; **AGAINST- 2** Cllr Roberts and Cllr Stephen; **ABSTENTION-1** Cllr Rich: the Chair used her casting vote for the resolution- **MOTION CARRIED.**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4 JANUARY 2021

Cllr Hibben **PROPOSED** to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 4 January 2021 as a true record; **SECONDED** by Cllr Rich: **FOR- 4, ABSTENTION- 1** Cllr Roberts- **MOTION CARRIED.** Cllr Hibben will sign the minutes when physical Council meetings are permitted.

5. MATTERS ARISING

7 December 2020

Unity Trust Bank

The Clerk reported that she had started the application and that she had received the details of two Councillors. Details are required from other Councillors so the application can be progressed. Online banking with Unity Trust Bank was recommended by the Independent Internal Auditor.

ACTION: Clerk to ascertain if Councillors can log their details separately.

Litter picker's risk assessment

Cllr Hibben said there had been a question with regards to the person carrying out the risk assessment, he is a Chartered Member of the Institute of Safety and Health. The assessor was going to arrange a Zoom meeting but the contractor did not want that.

ACTION: Clerk to ask the litter picker if she would have a phone briefing.

6. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The meeting was adjourned for the Public Time

A member of the public said that he had been approached about the planning application for 115 Sterling Road, neighbours are concerned about the proposal.

The meeting was reconvened.

7. REPORTS FROM BOROUGH AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

SBCllr S Stephen reported that the Swale Local Plan will go to Full Council on 3 February, if approved it will go out to public consultation for feedback.

Swale Borough Council is looking at the town centres and how they will recover from the pandemic. There has been a review and there is a budget to help paint and uplift the town centres.

There are temporary road closure orders for pedestrianisation in all three towns and the Council is looking to make them permanent. This will go out to public consultation. There has been some dissent in Faversham but there has been positive feedback from Sittingbourne and Sheerness. The main concern is regarding disabled access but because the measures were taken in an emergency due to the pandemic, there had been no time to sort out public access but this can be addressed within the public consultation. It addresses health issues and the climate change agenda. Pedestrians have been happy not to share the High Street with cars and the pollution. It has also encouraged people to use alternative transport such as cycling or walking. The High Streets are changing due to the collapse of businesses during the pandemic and will be a completely changed venue. Pedestrianisation is a way forward and will give a centre to the towns.

Cllr Hibben thanked SBCllr S Stephen for her report.

KCCllr Wright reported that it has been a busy month. Mass testing is starting in Maidstone due to the South African variant of COVID-19 which has been identified in ME15 and police and Council officers will be knocking on doors to encourage residents to take a test. If the new variant is found to be in other areas, such as Swale, mass testing will take place there to help nip the virus in the bud.

Residents have been in contact for help with Social Services and the Housing Association. KCCllr Wright said he had been copied in to correspondence by the Parish Council regarding Coffin Pond and Cllr Roberts has received a swift response.

The 11+ will be going ahead as usual, hopefully in September or October depending on the pandemic.

The extension to Highsted Grammar School has been approved. KCCllr Wright said that he has written to the Education and Skills Committee and also the Planning Committee regarding the highways infrastructure around Highsted Grammar School, Fulston Manner School and the Memorial Hospital; they cannot do anything about the issue of buses parking on the road. Comments from Lynsted Parish Council on the Local Plan have been circulated, neither Lynsted Parish Council nor Teynham Parish Council are happy with the proposed by-pass and 1,500 houses around Teynham. The Wises Lane proposal is still in the Local Plan. Cllr Hibben thanked KCCllr Wright for attending and for his report.

8. FINANCE

Cheques raised and quarterly accounts

Chq No	Payable to	Reason	Amount
1518	Mrs J Barnicott	Litter picker	£132.30
1519	Staff	Salary and expenses	£487.65
1520	HMRC	PAYE	£129.20

Councillors considered the invoices and cheques.

Cllr Burgess **PROPOSED** the signing of the cheques; **SECONDED** by Cllr Rich: **FOR- 4; AGAINST- 1: MOTION CARRIED.**

Cllr Roberts proposed that there be a finance session with the Independent Internal Auditor to clarify Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and required monthly information.

ACTION: Clerk to arrange meeting

Cllr Rich said the Council should have no problem with paying for professional support.

9. ADMINISTRATION

i. Statement of Internal Control

Councillors considered and amended the draft statement.

Cllr Roberts **PROPOSED** to adopt the statement as amended; **SECONDED** by Cllr Hibben: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ii. Website

The Clerk reported that the new website now has the .gov.uk domain name and the accessibility button is now working. HugoFox said that they were due to get the planning tracker working but this has not yet happened. Another issue is that as the Council has a .gov.uk website the Council needs a .gov.uk email address and a firm has quoted approx £40 set up and £5 per month.

Cllr Rich said if the planning tracker is not attached the Council might look at possibly using another website provider. The HugoFox website looks great on a laptop but on an iPad or an

iPhone it is very difficult to find your way round the site, they have moved the menus around. We need to find a date for the planning tracker.

Cllr Roberts said the Council went with HugoFox because of the planning tracker and that she does not, in principle have any problems in spending any money on this. The Council could access a grant from KCC if an alternative provider is chosen.

Cllr Roberts **PROPOSED** that if HugoFox does not give the Clerk a date for the planning tracker to go live, then either Cllr Roberts or Cllr Rich to contact the managing Director; **SECONDED** by Cllr Hibben: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Cllr Rich said the Council is financially well off and should not back off from using professionals to do the work.

10. PLANNING

i. Ref: 21/500138/FULL

Address: 115 Sterling Road Tunstall Sittingbourne Kent ME10 1SW

Proposal: Erection of part single, part two storey side and rear extension including Juliet balcony, together with roof alterations to create first floor with front and rear dormers.

Councillors considered the application. The Council had a number of representations in objection to this proposal and noted there had been two comments on the planning portal.

Councillors noted that at this point in Sterling Road the street scene is very open and also that bungalows in the proximity have had minimal extensions to date. The application is for a blocky loft conversion which will change the frontage of the small bungalow significantly. There is only a 1m gap between the ground floor and the boundary of the neighbouring property. Given there are only very small gardens here, the current rear of the property is only 22m from the bungalow to the rear. This extension will reduce the garden significantly and move the rear of the house closer to the back neighbours. There have been significant concerns raised regarding overlooking at the rear due to proximity and the Juliet balcony. The street behind is slightly lower – exacerbating the potential for overlooking. To the side, the proximity to the boundary would result in loss of residential amenity to the residents at 117 Sterling Road with the potential to block light and overshadow. Councillors considered that the mass and scale to be inappropriate in this specific location given the surrounding properties and the one to which this property is attached.

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to object to the proposal.

ii. 21/500222/FULL

Address: Grove End Farm Bredgar Road Tunstall Sittingbourne Kent ME9 8DY

Proposal: Change of use of agricultural barn to provide storage for seeds and crop protection products, precision farming services and office space.

Cllr Burgess left the meeting for the consideration of this item and did not take part in any discussion or vote on this matter.

Councillors considered the application and noted that the agricultural barn for grain storage had been put up under permitted development in March 2019. The application for change of use under research and development but the detail indicates it will be storage and distribution of agricultural products which would be a different class of use. It is on a farm which is a local employer and Councillors were keen for the farm to continue and succeed. Farms need to diversify but the application for change of use had been submitted soon after permitted development rights were granted for the barn.

There is considerable detail regarding transport which involves HGVs dropping off goods and van drivers taking goods away, three vans in and out a day, so there would be increase in van use. The transport statement says there will be a reduction in HGV use at the farm. There is going to be hazardous materials stored and there is no Hazardous Materials Storage Plan. There is nothing in the transport assessment about vehicles using hearts Delight Road or coming through Hollingbourne, these are width restricted roads.

When the grain store application was lodged it was supposedly to save the villagers having trucks go through the village, if that was the case the deliveries and HGVs would only be

seasonal. This application claims that there are over 50 HGV movements a week, this is not for the grain storage but for the contract machinery that the barn has been used to store for, therefore the number of lorries will no change and they are still over 6'6" wide. So the crop delivery business would be extra vehicle and the vans would effectively be a van delivery service. It could be a good place for the marketing materials if the trials are taking place on the farm but there would be no real reason for storing these particular products there. Agrovista UK Limited is a national company two depts in the Maidstone area so the vans could go out from those depots. This will not stop the HGVs. There is a listed building close by and two major connecting public pathways, there will be potentially hazardous materials nearby.

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to submit comments.

ACTION: Cllr Roberts to draft response.

Cllr Burgess returned to the meeting

iii. Ref: 21/500293/FULL

Address: 32 Hales Road Tunstall Sittingbourne Kent ME10 1SR

Proposal: First floor side/rear extension together with roof alterations. Erection of a detached garage.

Cllr Roberts left the meeting for the consideration of this item and did not take part in any discussion or vote on this matter.

Councillors considered the application and had concerns about the scale and massing of the proposal which abuts the setting of a listed building, the Tunstall Conservation Area and the countryside gap. Councillors request that the views of neighbours be taken into account

Cllr Roberts returned to the meeting

Ref: 20/506008/FULL - Proposed single storey rear extension. Address: Strathblane Hearts Delight Road Tunstall Sittingbourne Kent ME9 8JA

Cllr Roberts reported that a decision is yet to be made.

20/505385/FULL Erection of single storey side and rear extension. - 125 Sterling Road Tunstall Sittingbourne Kent ME10 1SS

Cllr Roberts informed Members that the application has been permitted.

11. HIGHWAYS

Cllr Burgess reported that the KCC website was down and that most of the issues had been resolved.

12. ENVIRONMENT

i. To receive an update

Cllr Burgess reported that he had not been able to remove the debris behind the planter due to his own work load and the inclement weather. It will be cleared as soon as possible.

ii. Coffin Pond

Cllr Roberts gave a further update that Alistair Coleman, KCC Highways Asset Engineer, has informed her that an Ecological Survey of Coffin Pond has been undertaken.

13. KALC COMMUNITY AWARD

Cllr Hibben reported that there have been no nominations for the award. The Council had been unable to hold the ceremony last year due to the pandemic. The Council could consider making an award in 2022.

Cllr Stephen said that it is difficult to plan things at the moment and an award in 2022 would be more appropriate post- COVID-19.

14. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS

Cllr Roberts reported that she had attended the Conservation Area Review meeting with Simon Algar, Swale Conservation Officer, SBCllr Bonney and a consultant. Only four people were permitted to attend the meeting. There will be a draft document which can be shared with residents and historians and then it will go to public consultation.

Cllr Rich informed Members that she has been invited to be on the KALC Executive Committee as one of two representatives from the KALC Swale Area Committee. The committee meets quarterly and is pushing ahead regarding websites and grants. Cllr Rich said that she had asked if there could be training on the new Agricultural Bill.

KCCllr Bowles joined the meeting

Cllr Hibben reported that she had attended the KALC Planning workshop via Zoom. It was a small and focused group which looked at the new White Paper.

KCCllr Wright said the KCC Scrutiny Committee has drafted a report on the Rural Farming Economy which could be taken to KALC. Lots of different businesses gave evidence to the committee.

15. HR COMMITTEE

i. To agree and appoint HR Committee

Councillors **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to appoint Cllr Burgess, Cllr Hibben and Cllr Roberts to the HR Committee and for Cllr Hibben to be Chair of the committee.

ii. Terms of Reference for the Committee

It was agreed to discuss the Terms of Reference for the committee in closed session at the end of the meeting.

16. CORRESPONDENCE

1. 18.01.21: Cllr Tim Valentine (SBC) regarding LED lighting
2. 18.01.21: KALC bitesize training
3. 21.01.21: KCC Member briefing- environment
4. 21.01.21: KCCllr Bowles- Newsletter
5. 25.01.21: KALC CEO bulletin
6. 25.01.21: Kent & Medway CCG- COVID vaccine update
7. 26.01.21: NALC CEO bulletin
8. 67.01.21: NALC Consultation Briefing EPC1-21 - MHCLG Consultation on Right to Regenerate to turn derelict buildings into homes and community assets
9. 27.01.21: KCC Highways road safety strategy consultation
10. 27.01.21: KALC: Kent & Medway Covid-19 Datasets Overview, plus mortality and NHS sitrep data
11. 27.01.21: SBC: Licensing consultation
12. 28.01.21: NALC COVID-19 update

17. ANY OTHER MATTERS ARISING

Cllr Hibben said that she had received a call from a resident who had received the vaccine and had said how well it was organised contrary to local reports.

SBCllr Stephen said that there had been a computer error which resulted in queues and insufficient vaccine as the session had been double booked.

Cllr Roberts asked that the Audit be on next month's agenda and she wanted to know the process and when the Internal Auditor would be engaged. Last year it came up in the summer and she would prefer it to be earlier.

The Clerk that last year the deadlines were pushed back because of COVID-19. The external auditor will publish the deadlines.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 1 March 2021 at 7.30pm

15. HR COMMITTEE

ii. Terms of Reference for the Committee

Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media were excluded from the meeting during the consideration of this item of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Councillors agreed the Terms of Reference for the HR Committee.
The Committee will meet on Wednesday 10 February at 7pm

ACTION: Clerk to circulate current policies to the committee.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10pm