

**Minutes of The Full Council Meeting held at The Rackliff Centre on
Monday 8th April 2024 at 7.30pm**

Members Present:

Cllr L Ellicott, Chair; Cllr A Britcher-Allan, Cllr C Ducklin, Cllr B Edwards, Cllr A Funnell, Cllr D Funnell, Cllr P Gripper and Cllr D Smith.

Officers Present:

Alison Stevens, Parish Clerk.

Others and Members of the Public:

There was one member of the public present.

- 1. Enquire whether anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting**
No one present filmed, photographed or recorded this meeting.

- 2. To receive and approve apologies for absence**
Councillor M O'Callaghan sent apologies for his absence. The reasons for his apologies were accepted by the Full Council.

- 3. Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**
Cllrs Ellicott, Gripper and Smith declared prejudicial interests and did not take part in the vote for item 9. Cllr Britcher-Allan declared a prejudicial interest in item 9.3 and did not take part in the vote.

- 4. Declarations of Lobbying**
There were no declarations of lobbying.

- 5. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 11th March 2024**
The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 11th March 2024 were agreed, and it was RESOLVED that the Chair sign them as a true and accurate record of the meeting.
5.1 Matters outstanding from these minutes (not listed as separate items). None.
5.2 Matters outstanding from previous minutes. It was agreed that Councillor Britcher-Allan can seek free pre-application advice for the cycle racks proposed, by the Environment Committee, at Common View.

- 6. Open session for questions from the public**

Ms Foster:

- Said a local company has repaired the Speedwatch equipment free of charge.
- Asked if the Parish Council is aware that the former White Hart pub is now being used for educational purposes. The Clerk will find out if planning permission has been applied for.

- 7. Session for County and Borough Councillor on matters concerning the Parish**

There was no report from the County Councillor on this occasion.

Borough Councillor Sharratt sent the following report;

'The Borough Council things I'd highlight are:

1. Elections - Biggest in 20 years, every council seat up for election, and I think worth doing everything we can to encourage high turnout in the Parish and making sure people understand that they can vote for 3 councillors, there have been boundary changes etc. People can still register to vote until 16th April [Register to vote - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk) and for a postal vote until 17th April [Apply for a postal vote - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)
2. Promote the near miss data reporting tool - road safety has been a big issue coming through from residents and this is something people can do when they feel that an accident was narrowly avoided either as a pedestrian, driver or cyclist. The more people know about it the more useful the data will be. [Report a near miss \(tunbridgewells.gov.uk\)](http://tunbridgewells.gov.uk)
3. It's also possible to report engine idling on the council website.
[Report engine idling \(tunbridgewells.gov.uk\)](http://tunbridgewells.gov.uk)
4. The Visit Tunbridge Wells website has had a relaunch and refresh and even has a Rusthall section (well of course!) I can feed back if you spot any errors in it.

[Rusthall | Visit Tunbridge Wells](#)

Borough Councillor Britcher-Allan also encouraged everyone to vote. She is currently trying to help two residents resolve a boundary issue.

8. Finance update

8.1: Accounts for Payment – Councillors RESOLVED to pay the following;

				£		
01.04.24	EE	DD	18.00	DD	Mobile	
05.04.24	SSE	DD	373.15	Rackliff - Gas		
09.04.24	The Cleaning Lady	BACS	78.00	Cleaning - Rackliff		
09.04.24	Information Commissioner	DD	40.00	Subscription		
09.04.24	Sticky Monkey	BACS	30.00	Updating banner		
09.04.24	Nest	DD	46.65	Pensions		
09.04.24	KPC	BACS	720.44	Pensions		
09.04.24	HMRC	BACS	1211.31	BACS PAYE - April		
09.04.24	Capel Groundcare	BACS	449.12	Groundcare Contract		
09.04.24	Rialtas	BACS	332.40	Software support		
09.04.24	Rialtas	BACS	298.80	Software support – Allotments		
09.04.24	JT Building	BACS	1440.00	Concrete base at WG		
09.04.24	SJ Matthews	BACS	10.00	Key Deposit Allotment SR38		
09.04.24	A Britcher-Allan	BACS	200.00	Roofing felt		
09.04.24	Employees	BACS	3542.98	Salaries - April		

8.2 Grant Requests – It was RESOLVED to award the Bonfire and Fete Committee:

- i. A grant of £360 to cover the hire of the hall for one year for its Coffee Mornings. The application to pay for advertising expenses was turned down because Councillors felt there are plenty other ways to advertise that are free and the Committee is already utilising.
- ii. A further £690, of which £300 is to cover the cost of Punch and Judy at the summer fete and £390 is for hiring the ‘Company of Critters’.

- 9. Allotments Committee –**
- 9.1** There was nothing new to report from the Southwood Road Working Party.
- 9.2** At the last meeting it was agreed that the Allotments Manager and Councillor Ellicott could apply for a grant of £5000 from the Gatwick Airport Community Trust to complete Phase 2 of the All Ability Garden. They have now applied for the grant.
- 9.3** It was RESOLVED to dismantle, transport and re-erect (total cost £1758), a pavilion which is a gift from Crossways at Wickham Gardens allotments.
- 10. Grounds Maintenance Contract 2024-2027 –** The new contractor has been appointed and took over the Maintenance Contract from the 1st April 2024.
- 11. Annual Tree Survey –** At the last meeting it was also RESOLVED to accept the lowest price for the works recommended in the Annual Tree Survey which was from a company called Treeworks. The works have now been carried out and Cllr D Smith said he was very impressed with the company's level of professionalism.
- 12. Defibrillator Update –** There were no new updates on the defibrillators.
- 13. Highways –** At the last meeting it was RESOLVED that Councillor Gripper will update the Highways Improvement Plan because although the issues in it still needed to be addressed, there was other work that also needed doing. He circulated the revised plan (dated April 2024) ahead of this meeting which Councillors RESOLVED to accept.

Councillors Ellicott and Gripper are to meet Greg Clark MP with the Commons Ranger and Commons Manager to work out how to get their issues with the A264 addressed. Residents have been asked to submit their experiences of near misses and problems they have experienced on the A264 in the meantime.

- 14. Rusthall Volunteers –** There was nothing new to report.
- 15. Village Talking Benches –** The Vicar at St Paul's is considering putting two 'talking benches' in the grounds of the Church Centre which residents can sit on to talk to others to help combat loneliness and he has asked if the Parish Council would consider contributing towards the costs. It was agreed in principle to help fund the benches as long as they meet legislative standards for public benches, and are designed to prevent rough sleepers using them.

Councillor Ellicott subsequently reported this back to the vicar and he has asked the Parish Council to submit details of suitable suppliers.

- 16. Chair's Report –** Councillor Ellicott attended the TWBC Chair's Meeting on the 18th March where she learned:
- The Borough Council has extra funding available to help it deal with anti-social behaviour issues.
 - About the TWBC People's Strategy.

It was also agreed that she can award this year's KALC Community Scheme Award winner their certificate at the Quiz Night on the 27th April.

- 17. Officers' Report –** The Parish Council is due to receive a framed print of King Charles III to display in the meeting hall or council offices. Councillors decided not to display it because there hadn't been one for the late Queen.

- 18. Diary Dates**
- | | | |
|----------------------------|--------|-------------------------------|
| 13 th May 2024 | 7.30pm | Full Council Meeting |
| 18 th Apr 2024 | 7.30pm | Parish Assembly |
| 22 nd Apr 2024 | 7.30pm | Environment Committee Meeting |
| 17 th June 2024 | 7.30pm | Allotment Committee Meeting |

19. Items for Information – None.

20. Next meeting of Full Council -
 13th May 2024 7.30pm The Rackliff Centre

DUE TO THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM IT WAS RESOLVED TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC UNDER THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSIONS TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960.

- 21. To consider confidential staffing matters and agree any further action.**
 Rusthall Parish Council RESOLVED:
- 21.1 to appoint Claire Reed as its new Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer.
 - 21.2 Ms Reed will be paid Salary Point 39.
 - 21.3 the Chair can sign the Contract of Employment circulated before the meeting.

There was no further business, and the meeting closed at 8.29pm.

..... Chairman

Dated