

**Minutes of The Annual Statutory Meeting held at The Rackliff Centre on
Monday 9th May 2022 at 7.30pm**

Members Present:

Cllr Liz Ellicott, Chair; Cllr Barry Edwards, Vice Chair; Cllr Alex Britcher-Allan, Cllr Chris Ducklin, Cllr Dave Funnell, Cllr Paul Gripper, Cllr Mark O'Callaghan and Cllr Doug Smith.

Officers Present:

Alison Stevens, Locum Clerk

Others and Members of the Public:

Two members of the public were also present.

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

- 2. To receive and approve apologies for absence**
Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Aimee Taylor. The reason for her apologies was accepted by the Full Council.

County Councillor James McInroy also sent apologies for his absence.

- 3. Election of Chairman**
Councillor Gripper proposed and Councillor Britcher-Allan seconded Councillor Ellicott for the role of Chairman. All were in favour. Councillor Ellicott duly accepted the role.

- 4. Election of Vice Chairman**
Councillor O'Callaghan proposed and Councillor Smith seconded Councillor Edwards for the role of Vice Chairman. Councillor Edwards duly accepted the role.

- 5. Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**
There were no declarations of interest nor were there any changes to the Register of Interests.

- 6. Declarations of Lobbying**
None.

- 7. Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on the 4th April 2022**
The Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on the 4th April 2022 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). The new Ranger is expected to start working from the small office from June on a hot desk basis.
 - 5.2** Matters outstanding from previous minutes. The Parish Council is still waiting for an update on the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA)
 - 5.3** The minutes of the Parish Assembly held on the 14th April 2022 were agreed and it was RESOLVED that the Chair sign them as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

- 8. Open session for questions from the public**
Residents asked;

- i. If the Parish Council is aware of a fundraising event called Rusthall Rocks which is being held on the 9th July to raise money for Ukraine. A temporary entertainments licence has been applied for which indicates it should be a one off event. Details of the licence can be found on the Sevenoaks District Council website.
- ii. For two benches to be repaired in Nellington Road. The benches are also covered by overgrown vegetation. Councillor Britcher-Allan said she will sort out the repair issue and Councillor Funnell, confirmed he will arrange for the vegetation to be cut back. The Parish Council understands that both benches are owned by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

Mr Heasman, from Speedwatch sent a written report in which he said;

‘I met with Liz Ellicott and James McInroy this week to discuss further rollout of 20mph signs/roundels. During our walk to review the potential sites I suggested a change that would help slow traffic using Meadow Road/Ashley Gardens as a 'rat run' through to Southborough/Tonbridge and the A21.

In essence there are 2 crossroads on the length of Meadow Road and Ashley Gardens. These are Erskine Park road and Ashley Park/Ashley Park Close. The SW team have witnessed a number of near misses on both of these junctions and I've also witnessed others as I am a Meadow Road resident. Those that I've seen I've recorded on the TWBC near miss register. The problem is that vehicles exiting these roads to cross Meadow Road/Ashley Gardens cannot see up or down Meadow Road/Ashley Gardens until the front of the vehicle is well out into the road - hence the number of incidents.

I suggested that by changing the priority of these junctions so that traffic using Meadow Road/Ashley Gardens has to Stop/Give Way to traffic coming out of Erskine Park Road or Ashley Park/Ashley Park Close. A number of benefits will be gained. It will force traffic to slow down at 2 places down the length of Meadow Road/Ashley Gardens thus reducing the overall speed of these 2 roads. It will also slow traffic passing the Mary Caley rec - Adults and Children regularly cross the road here. So improved safety along with reduced speed. NB - we held an SW session by the Mary Caley Rec - Out of 66 cars that came down towards the Rec 22 were above 25mph with one recorded at 36mph - in a 1hour session! Over 30% well in excess of the 20mph limit!’

His report was delegated to Councillor Ducklin for further consideration.

9. Session for County and Borough Councillor on matters concerning the Parish

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

Councillor Funnell said;

- it has been a quiet month at the Borough Council because it was election time.
- He has received a couple of complaints, one about the lack of enforcement for those who break the 20mph speed limits and one about Rusthall Rocks.

Councillor Britcher-Allan said;

- she has still not received any updates about the electric vehicle charging points.
- she is dealing with a case of a resident facing homelessness.

10. Appointment of Committee Members

10.1 Finance Committee - Cllr O'Callaghan, Cllr Edwards, Cllr Ellicott, Cllr Funnell and Cllr Smith.

10.2 Highways & Transport Committee - Cllr Ducklin, Cllr Edwards, Cllr Britcher-Allan, Cllr Smith, Cllr Funnell, Cllr O'Callaghan, Cllr Taylor and Cllr Gripper.

10.3 Planning Committee - Cllr Edwards, Cllr Britcher-Allan, Cllr Ellicott, Cllr

- Ducklin, Cllr Taylor and Cllr Smith.
- 10.4** Allotments Committee - Cllr Smith, Cllr Edwards, Cllr Ellicott, Cllr Gripper, Cllr Funnell and non-voting members Miss S French and Mr L Banks.
- 10.5** Environment Committee - Cllr Britcher – Allan, Cllr A Taylor, Cllr Liz Ellicott, Cllr P Gripper and non-voting members Jenny Blackburn; Jayne Sharratt and Phillip Wheeler
- 10.6** The High Weald Councils Aviation Action Group (HWCAAG) – Cllr L Ellicott.
- 10.7** Common Conservators – Cllr P Gripper.
- 10.8** Pond Warden – Ms J Blackburn.

11. Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC)

Cllr Ellicott, Chairman was approved as KALC representative and Cllr Edwards, Vice-Chairman was approved as her deputy.

12. To review the effectiveness of the system of Internal Control

It was RESOLVED to approve the Statement of Internal Control which will now be added to the website.

13. To approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2021 - 2022

Councillors RESOLVED to approve Section 1 of the Annual Return for the year-ending 31st March 2021 which was then signed by the Chair and Officer Stevens.

14. To approve the Accounting Statements for 2021 - 2022

Councillors RESOLVED to approve Section 2 of the Annual Return, the supporting Bank Reconciliation and the Explanation of Significant Variances for the year ending 31st March 2022. Section 2 was then signed off by the Chair and was also signed before the meeting by the Locum Responsible Finance Officer.

15. To agree the dates of inspection period for the accounts as the 13th June to 22nd July 2022 – Approved.

16. Finance update – Cllr O’Gallaghan had no worries about the accounts and nothing new to add.

16.1 Accounts for Payment – the following payments were approved;

		£	
Capel Groundcare	BACS	76.80	Strimming and matting
Microshade	BACS	245.98	Computer hosting
Simply Shredding	BACS	18.00	Shredding
Linda Neusten	BACS	6.15	Expenses
The Living Forest	BACS	307.20	Fallen Ash Tree
Omni Skips	BACS	780.00	Asbestos clearance
KALC	BACS	1509.94	Annual subscription
Viking	BACS	65.66	Stationery
C May	BACS	260.00	Locum RFO April
HMRC	BACS	168.47	NI Month 1
J Mathews	BACS	28.75	Refund Allotment Rent
Capel Groundcare	BACS	57.60	Strimming
Capel Groundcare	BACS	436.13	Groundcare Contract
Alison Stevens	BACS	2208.30	Locum Clerk
K Watson	BACS	735.55	Month 2 Salary
Linda Neusten	SACS	851.66	Month 2 Salary

16.2 Rackliff Centre –

- i: to consider replacing the boiler update – Councillors RESOLVED to delegate this item to the Environment Committee so they can research greener options.
- ii: to consider more extensive drainage works – Councillors RESOLVED to accept the price for the work recommended in the Go-Flow Drainage Report at a total cost of £1125 plus VAT.

16.3 Local History Group Request – At the last Finance Committee Meeting Councillors were advised that the Rusthall Local History Group was about to close and they were asked to consider minding the funds on the group’s behalf until a decision is made on how the money should be spent. The Locum RFO offered to check with the Internal Auditor to make sure Rusthall Parish Council can legally carry out the request.

He has since confirmed that the money can only be gifted to the Parish Council to spend on historical issues (that the society can advise us of) and only councillors can be signatories. The Clerk will let the History Group know.

16.4 Tunbridge Wells Citizen’s Advice – Grant Request – Councillors carefully considered the request and RESOLVED to award Citizen’s Advice a grant of £2000.

Councillor Smith said it is unlikely they will go back to holding their sessions in the Doctor’s Surgery because every room is now being used.

17. Environment Committee update

17.1 RESOLVED to adopt the draft minutes of the Environment Committee Meeting which was held on the 25th April 2022.

18. Highways and Transport Committee update

18.1 RESOLVED to adopt the draft minutes of the Highways and Transport Committee Meeting which was held on the 28th April 2022.

19. Chair’s Report – Cllr Ellicott said;

- i. She met County Councillor McInroy with Mr Heasman and is happy to push forward the suggestions made by the latter in the public session.
- ii. The Highway’s contractors have until the middle of June to renew the faulty roundels in the 20mph zone.
- iii. County Councillor McInroy suggested approaching the landowner who might be agreeable to having a mirror on their property at the junction of Lower Green Road and Ashley Park Road. The landowner would have to accept liability though.
- iv. There was a low turnout at this year’s Parish Assembly so she suggested advertising it more extensively next year. This years was arranged at short notice because of the situation with Covid.
- v. The Parish Council has received a mixed response to the bunting in the High Street.
- vi. The Sea Cadets are going to attend the lighting of the beacon on the 2nd June. They will play the bugle call.
- vii. She visited the opening of the Amelia Scott and was very impressed by what she saw.

20. Officers’ Report – The price to fit the defibrillator in the new position has now been agreed and the contractor is going to visit the landlady of The Toad to agree a date for the work to take place,

21. Diary Dates

6 th June 2022	7.30pm	Full Council Meeting.
13 th June 2022	7.30pm	Finance Committee Meeting
20 th June 2022	7.30pm	Allotment Committee Meeting
18 th July 2022	7.30pm	Environment Committee Meeting

22. Items for Information – Councillor Britcher-Allan thanked Councillors Smith, Ellicott and Gripper for all their help at the Community Larder.

Councillor Ellicott invited everyone to the Local Family History Group Meeting on the 12th May.

Councillors discussed the safety of their staff and agreed at the next meeting to;

- i. review the Lone Worker Policy
- ii. review the Risk Assessment for the Rackliff Centre
- iii. consider other ways to improve safety.

In the meantime the Locum Clerk will;

- i. find out if a different lock can be fitted to the front door so it is not possible for a key to be left in it.
- ii. Arrange for a hook to be placed by the front door so the existing key doesn't have to be left in the lock.
- iii. Advise staff who are working on their own not to lock any door of any room they are in and to only use the disabled toilet where escape is easier.
- iv. Arrange for all locks to be serviced quarterly.

Panic buttons, a lifeline type device and CCTV were also discussed.

23. Next meeting of Full Council -

6 th June 2022	7.30pm	The Rackliff Centre
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There was no further business, and the meeting closed at 9.15pm.

..... Chairman

Dated