

**Minutes of The Full Council Meeting held at The Rackliff Centre on  
Monday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at 7.30pm**

**Members Present:**

Cllr Liz Ellicott, Chair; Cllr Mark O’Callaghan, Vice Chair; 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**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Alex Britcher-Allan. The reasons for her apologies were accepted by the Full Council.

County Councillor James McInroy and Borough Councillor Jayne Sharratt also sent apologies for their absence.

- 3. Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**

Cllrs Ellicott, Gripper and Smith declared prejudicial interests in item 9 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 11<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

Councillor A Funnell questioned whether Councillor Edwards apologies were read out at the last meeting. The Clerk will check the recording and action appropriately.

The word ‘is’ was also deleted from Minute 12.4 line 5.

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 11<sup>th</sup> September 2023 were then 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 Christmas lights in item 8.2 have been ordered and the licence process has started. It was agreed to begin the licensing process in June in future because there will be a better selection of lights available.

The Parish Council has received an unsatisfactory response from TWBC about the trees on the new development by the Red Lion. The Clerk will check the Borough Council looked at the right ones.

**5.2** Matters outstanding from previous minutes. None.

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

Ms Foster said;

- The wall in Lower Green Road, which had been damaged by badgers, has now been repaired. She said it was such a good job that she wrote to the company who carried out the work and thanked them.
- The Weald of Kent School has spare tents and might be able to donate some to the Scouts. (Minute reference 8.5).

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

There was no report from either County Councillor McInroy or Borough Councillor Britcher-Allan on this occasion.

Borough Councillor Sharratt sent a written report in which she said;

‘You've probably seen the news of the purchase of the lease of Royal Victoria Place by the council - you can find more information here; Royal Victoria Place FAQs (tunbridgewells.gov.uk)

New management is already in place and I've been impressed by their energy, ideas and commitment when I met them - it makes me feel excited to see what change will unfold over the next months and years.

I spoke to the parking enforcement team recently and they confirmed that they do come through the village with the ability to issue tickets once a day as well as during the night or early hours of the morning. They said that the number of tickets issued in Rusthall have actually gone down and they have to observe cars for 2 minutes before issuing tickets.

As you'll already know I was part of an online meeting with Phil Jones Associates along with Liz and Paul about the active travel route they are designing between Langton Green, Rusthall and the town centre. This is only funded to the design process so far. I'm sure Liz and Paul will update you on the meeting but I'll also be keeping an interested eye on what design they come up with. I understand the process should be finished in December.

That's all for now, but if there's anything you have questions about or I can help with let me know.’

Councillor D Funnell confirmed the Borough Council already owned 10% of the Royal Victoria Place lease and has now bought the remaining 90%.

## 8. Finance update – Cllr O’Callaghan was happy there was nothing to report on the accounts.

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

				£	
02/10/2023	EE	DD	60.25	Mobiles	
02/10/2023	SSE	DD	194.50	Rackliff Electricity	
10/10/2023	m:power	BACS	126.00	Pension	
10/10/2023	KCC	BACS	500.00	KCC Pension Fund	
10/10/2023	Mrs Brittle	BACS	10.00	Refund Security Key	
10/10/2023	Cardinus	BACS	167.99	Insurance Survey	
10/10/2023	Mazars	BACS	504.00	Audit	
10/10/2023	Mr Turley	BACS	30.00	Refund Security Key	
10/10/2023	Linda Neusten	BACS	6.85	Postage	
10/10/2023	Little Loads	BACS	20.00	Rubbish Clearance	
10/10/2023	Viking	BACS	100.73	Stationery/Chair	
10/10/2023	Viking	BACS	53.47	Stationery/Postage	
10/10/2023	C May	BACS	143.00	Locum RFO	
10/10/2023	Capel	BACS	449.12	Allotment Maintenance	

10/10/2023	HMRC	BACS	757.62	PAYE
10/10/2023	Cleaning Lady	BACS	78.00	Rackliff Cleaning
10/10/2023	Hugo Fox	BACS	122.28	Website Hosting
10/10/2023	Microshade	BACS	322.44	Computer Hosting
10/10/2023	Employees	BACS	2887.79	Salaries

**8.2** The Quarterly Review of Expenditure v Budget – The Summary Receipts and Payments were noted and will be used by Councillors at the next meeting when they decide the precept for 2024/25.

**8.3** The Quarterly Review of Receipts and Payments – The detailed Receipts and Payments was also noted and will be used for the same purpose.

**8.4** Budget 2023/2024 Updates – As 8.2.

**8.5** It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk will ask the Scouts to find out if the tents, which are no longer needed by the Weald of Kent School, are suitable for them and report back.

**9. Allotments Committee** – It was **RESOLVED** to:

**9.1** Adopt the draft minutes of, and the recommendations made at, the Allotment Committee Meeting held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023.

**9.2** Transfer a total of £4363.33 from EMR Village Maintenance/Trees to General Reserves to cover £1513.33 (Code 4213) spent in April, and to pay £2780 for the new tree works agreed at the Allotment Meeting held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October.

It was also **RESOLVED** to transfer the £1000 received from Gatwick Airport to the Allotment Budget. A further £2000 will be transferred from the Ear Marked Reserves (Village Maintenance/Trees) and £500 from General Reserves to cover the costs of fencing needed as a result of an unforeseen boundary dispute.

**9.3** Commission The Living Forest to carry out an Annual Tree Inspection of the Parish Council owned trees for Risk Assessment/Insurance Purposes.

**9.4** Following some initial teething problems, all allotment holders should now have received notice reminding them their annual rent is due. Anyone who has not is asked to email [allotments@rusthallparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:allotments@rusthallparishcouncil.org.uk)  
Some trees needed cutting back at the far end of Wickham Gardens on land owned by TWBC. The work is waiting to be signed off by its Finance Department.

**10. Environment Committee** – It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the draft minutes of, and the recommendations made at, the Environment Committee Meeting held on the 24<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

**11. Defibrillator Update** – The defibrillator at Toad Rock has been risk assessed and was found to be in good working order in September. There was no update on the one at the URC.

**12. Highways** –The Parish Council **RESOLVED** to focus its efforts on getting the speed limit on the A264 reduced to 30mph instead of having a crossing because of the constant refusal by KCC to agree to one. Reducing the speed limit;

- i. Will help reduce the number and impact of any accidents.
- ii. Should help make it easier to extend the 20mph zone from Lower Green Road to Coach Road.
- iii. Could ultimately help get a crossing there.

Councillors Ellicott and Gripper and representatives from the Conservators will meet Mr Nigel Rowe of KCC Highways on the 25<sup>th</sup> October to progress the matter further.

Councillor A Funnell suggested the Parish Council might like to also consider applying for a crossing by the White Hart.

Councillor Ducklin said the County Council has refreshed some of the line markings in the parish but not the ones the Parish Council wants.

13. **Rusthall Volunteers** – It was **RESOLVED** to spend £200 each year on a domain name for a new website which will explain the benefits of volunteering and have links to groups who need volunteers. A package will also be needed.

Councillor O’Callaghan said he will set up and maintain the new website and he will write to all community groups for their advice to make sure it gives them the maximum benefit.

The website, will be a stand-alone project supported by the Parish Council. Marketing plans will also be explored.

Councillor Ellicott thanked Councillor O’Callaghan for all the work he is putting into this venture.

Councillor Ducklin suggested the Scouts could help the voluntary sector as part of the work they do for their community badges. The Scout Leader will also be invited to this year’s Parish Assembly to help raise their profile.

14. **Rusthall Civic Plaque update** – Councillor O’Callaghan said he thought the Parish Council has a policy for deciding who to award plaques to. The Clerk will check and report back.

15. **Chair’s Report** – Councillor Ellicott met the Editor of Rusthall Life and asked for an article about the new All Abilities Allotment to be included in the next edition.

Councillors Ellicott, Gripper, A Funnell and D Funnell met business owners and the URC on the 28<sup>th</sup> September. The meeting was called by Borough Councillor Sharratt to find out what they thought about having a single yellow line between St Pauls Street and Granville Road.

Councillor Ellicott and Gripper and the Clerk had a virtual meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October with Phil James Associates (PJA). PJA has been commissioned to prepare a design for an improved cycle route between Langton Road, Rusthall and Tunbridge Wells Town Centre. The plan is to put together a bid for a deliverable scheme, which has widespread support, in December 2023/January 2024.

Councillor O’Callaghan has agreed to lay this year’s wreath at the Remembrance Day Service at Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Councillor Ellicott will lay the one at St Paul’s Church. The Parish Council also donates £150 towards crosses supplied by the British Legion.

16. **Officers’ Report** – Officer Stevens attended two KALC Training Conferences recently, one was the Clerk’s Conference, the other was about Finance. She found both extremely useful.

17. **Diary Dates**

13 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2023	7.30pm	Full Council Meeting
23 <sup>rd</sup> Oct 2023	7.30pm	Environment Committee Meeting
28 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2023	7.00pm	Rusthall Bonfire and Fireworks
28 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2023	8.00am	Litter pick

18. **Items for Information** – The next meeting of the Family History Group is on 19<sup>th</sup> October at 10.30am at the library.

**19. Next meeting of Full Council -**  
13<sup>th</sup> Nov 2023      7.30pm      The Rackliff Centre

There was no further business, and the meeting closed at 8.45pm.

..... Chairman

Dated .....