

# RUSTHALL PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of Meeting

Date: Monday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2011

at United Reformed Church, on the corner of the High Street and Manor Road, Rusthall

### Present

Councillors: J.Blackburn (Chairman), B.J.Edwards, M.Simmons, M.L.Lawrence, J.Clark

Clerk: P. Cummins the Monitoring Officer of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council is acting as Interim Parish Clerk

Also present: Borough Councillors Atwood, Webb, Press and Public

1. Apologies for absence.- Apologies received from Cllrs Elwood (Vice Chairman), Watson, Codd and Geer..
2. Declaration of Interests.
  - 2.1 Councillor Lawrence declared a personal interest in item 8 as he is an allotment holder and Councillor Simmons declared a personal interest in item 10 as she is a resident of Upper Street.
3. Minutes of the meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> October 2011 were agreed.
4. Kent Fire and Rescue Service
  - 4.1 The Council received a presentation from Anne Millington, Chief Executive of Kent Fire and Rescue, Graham Day and John Robertson.
  - 4.2 The main points of the presentation were that Kent Fire and Rescue were in the process of a 3 year review of the service, including the structure and equipment, with a view to putting in place a service for the next 20 years.
  - 4.3 Part of the review was looking at closing 8 and opening 5 Fire Stations. The emphasis was having the right resource in the right place. As Rusthall was a part-time station it was proposed Rusthall should be closed. The results of the review were to be implemented from 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2012.

- 4.4 Rusthall was served by both Tunbridge Wells and Southborough Fire Stations. Tunbridge Wells was manned 24 hours and experience was therefore that the Tunbridge Wells crew could get to an incident in Rusthall quicker than the Rusthall part-time crew who would first have to report to Rusthall Fire Station.
- 4.5 Questions were first raised by Parish Councillors and these minutes set out some of the main points. The Chairman asked about responsibility in Care Homes for alarms ringing (the point had been made by the Fire Service Representatives that call out to alarms that had sounded due to lack of maintenance, false alarms was a major problem). It was confirmed that responsibility fell to the Care home Manager.
- 4.6 Councillor Edwards was supportive of the results of the review and as an ex-Fireman he could appreciate in particular the issues with Rusthall.
- 4.7 Questions were then put from the Borough Councillors and public who were present. Councillor Webb was not supportive of the proposals and felt the review was a money saving exercise. This was refuted by the Fire Service representatives.
- 4.8 Councillor Atwood noted that all of the five new Fire Stations were in North and East Kent. The Fire Service representatives confirmed this was the case and it was because it had been identified that this part of Kent was not strategically well served whereas West Kent was much better supported from the Fire Stations in West Kent and those of neighbouring areas such as East Sussex.
5. Village Survey Update - There was no update as Councillor Watson was detained in London and could not get to the meeting to give an update.
6. Report from the Planning Committee.
- 6.1 The report from the Chairman of the Planning Committee (Councillor Edwards) set the Parish Council's statutory responses decided at a meeting on the 30<sup>th</sup> October 2011 to three applications which had been received since the last meeting.
- 6.2 Application 23 Shirley Grove – recommendation approve under Officer delegation.
- 6.3 Application 18 Tristan Gardens – recommendation approve under Officer delegation.
- 6.4 Application Rusthall Elms & Middlefield – recommendation refusal in respect of one tree, cutting back canopy and approve the rest..

7. Notice Board - The Notice Board had been delivered and arrangements were being made for installation to take place in the next 10 days.

8. Allotments Update.

8.1 The Chairman reported back from the meeting held on the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2011 between Parish Councillors and Allotment Holders. Approximately 30 out of the 40 Allotment holders that attended voted for the Parish Council to take forward proposals for the 3 Allotment sites.

8.2 It was agreed a Working Group would be set up to take this forward comprising the Chairman and Councillors Edwards, Geer, Lawrence, Codd and one representative from each of the 3 Allotment sites.

9. Christmas Lights - It was agreed to vire additional funds of £330 to fund the cost of provision of Christmas Lights in the total sum of £1080.

10. Harmony Street

10.1 The Chairman set out a proposed solution to the problem of bank erosion at Harmony Street as set out in the letter dated 31 October 2011 from Rodney Stone, Clerk to the Commons Conservators.

10.2 It was agreed to support the solution to bank erosion of Harmony Street as set out in the letter.

10.3 It was agreed to part fund the proposed solution to the sum of £200.

Councillor Atwood advised the meeting that the Borough Council would also part fund the solution with Kent County Council on a ratio of 1-2 with the Borough Council paying one part for the County Council's two parts.

11. Financial Standing Orders - It was agreed to adopt the Financial Regulations circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

12. Financial Delegations

12.1 the Interim Clerk set out the need to set out a Chairman's expenses fund in order to pay for the two prizes for completion of the Village Survey and Youth Survey Questionnaires.

12.2 It was agreed to allocate a Chairman's expenses fund for this municipal year of £100.

### 13. Cheques/Payments

#### 13.1 Table of payments approved by the Council

Balance brought forward - £7,579.84\*

\*Balances over £2,000 attract interest under the terms of the Council's banking arrangements with the Co-operative Bank.

Date	Payee	Description	Cheque Number	Amount	Balance
10/10/11	United Reform Church	Hall Hire 10/10/11	100009	£30-00 PAID	£7,549.84
04/11/11	Greenbarnes Ltd	Notice Board	100010	£973.97	£6575.87
21/10/11	KALC	Attendance of 3x Councillors at Finance Conference 07/10/11	100011	£216.00	£6359.87
13/10/11	Reimburse Jenny Blackburn	Snow shovel 9.99, Broom 8.99 and Nylon Broom 4.99	100012	£23.97	£6335.90

Note: The Chairman left the Meeting when Councillors discussed the cheque reimbursement for money she had paid for the snow shovel and broom costs.

#### 14. Consideration of any Urgent Business

14.1 The Chairman notified the meeting of a letter received from the Borough Council Urban Design Team Leader informing the parish of the availability of grants for Heritage projects.

14.2 The Chairman notified the meeting of a need to change the April 2012 meeting to the 16<sup>th</sup> April since the original date of the 9<sup>th</sup> April was a bank holiday.

14.3 The Chairman gave an update on streetlights that had been repaired.

14.4 The Chairman gave an update on 20mph speed limits.

14.5 The Chairman announced a Carol singing event on the 8<sup>th</sup> December organised by St Paul's Church.

15. Open Session for Public, Borough and County Councillors

Question about traffic calming measures. Highways Officer to discuss location.  
Councillor Webb gave a report of his activities.

Date of the next meeting Monday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2011 at 7.30pm at the United Reform Church, Rusthall.