

SHIPBOURNE PARISH
COUNCIL

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Clerk to the Council

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Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held at 7.00 p.m. on Monday 11 December 2023

Present: Cllr James Sheldrick (Vice Chair, *chaired the meeting*), Cllr Dagger, Cllr Leach, Cllr Oram, The Parish Clerk, County Councillor Rayner

1. **Apologies for absence** - Cllr Redman, Cllr Davis, Cllr Crisp, Cllr Lark
2. **Dispensations and Declarations of Interest** - Cllr Sheldrick declared an interest in Footpath MR392
3. **Councillor Vacancy** – No candidates have come forward.
4. **To approve as a correct record Minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 13th November 2023** – The Minutes were agreed and signed as a true copy.
5. **Report from County Councillor** - Cllr Rayner reported that KCC had won a case against the Home Office regarding asylum seeking children, the damages to be awarded have yet to be decided.

Regarding the Kent Travel Saver, discussions are taking place about discretionary funds and what can be done over the next 2-3 years. It will have to go to consultation and the decision may be delayed due to elections next year.

Household Waste and Recycling Sites - there is no decision yet on which of the sites will close. Cllr Rayner thought that it was unlikely that the site at Allington would close. Cllr Rayner thought that one very large site at a port location would be the end goal as there would be more possibilities for recycling.

There are likely to be significant cuts in adult services and new ways of doing things.

Cllr Sheldrick asked for clarification on spend on SEND transport. Cllr Rayner confirmed that the spend for 23/24 is £80million and that it is likely to rise in 2025. 70% KCC budget goes on adult and Childrens services.

Cllr Rayner left the meeting at 7.18pm.

6. **Public Open Session**
7. **Highways & Footpaths - Highways Improvement Plan (HIP)** – Request for priority signage on Puttenden Road – The Clerk reported that the Design & Delivery Team at Kent Highways are looking at a design for two 'Road Narrows' signs on Puttenden Road. Request for Quiet Lanes on Hildenborough Road – We have been informed by Kent Highways that the road isn't suitable. Cllr Lark has been in contact with the Clerk to say that he is struggling to get enough volunteers for Speedwatch. The Clerk had forwarded the name of a resident who has said that she would like to be involved, but we need more volunteers. A broken sign on Hildenborough Road has been reported. Councillors were asked to report broken signs and potholes to the Clerk to report via the portal as there is a new budget for potholes.
8. **Matters arising**
 - 8.1. **Grass Cutting at Wightwicks and at Dunks Green 2023** - Completed. Cllr Sheldrick will chase up the invoice for work done.
 - 8.2. **Removal of Telecoms box** - Dunks Green – The Clerk reported that she had spoken to Openreach who said that they would send someone out to look at the box on 7th December. There has been no further correspondence and Cllr Oram said that she would check the box when next in the area.
 - 8.3. **Shipbourne Farmers Market** - Nothing to report
 - 8.4. **Website Upgrade** - Cllr Oram recommended the Horsemonden website.
 - 8.5. **Climate Change Group** – Cllr Dagger reported that Climate Action Shipbourne (CAS) and members of Plaxtol Parish had met with Alex Templeton (UK Community Works, who were part of SENE projects (South East New Energy)) and Carrie Spencer, Climate Change Officer TMBC to discuss how to progress a project on solar panels in Shipbourne. A geospatial survey was carried out in Shipbourne and Plaxtol and identified that there were enough buildings (excluding Listed buildings) that would be capable of taking panels to produce enough electricity for the community. The survey looked at rooves rather than fields as they are too far from the grid. The next step is to

Signed.....Dated.....

apply for a grant to set up a community scheme and Jenny Bate is meeting with KCC and TMBC on Wednesday to get advice on how to apply. The group is also going to find out whether Plaxtol and Hadlow would like to work together in applying for the grant. The Clerk said that we should allow some funding in our budget to apply for the grant and/or publicise the project to parishioners. There will be a further meeting in January and the Clerk will forward details.

- 8.6. Footpaths** –Update on resurfacing MR392. Further request for dog gates. Defer to January meeting.
- 8.7. KALC Awards** – Nominations – a candidate was agreed and the Clerk will complete the application.
- 8.8. Meeting dates 2024** – Circulated, the April meeting will be confirmed.
- 8.9. Budget 2024/5** – The Clerk circulated a draft schedule as a starting point for calculating our precept. The Clerk agreed to do a breakdown of expenditure and building reserves. The Clerk said that we need to build funds to maintain the village hall and Cllr Leach said that we needed to prioritise reserves for new windows, insulation and damp proofing at the village hall. The damp can be looked at fairly quickly and Cllr Leach agreed to get some quotes.
- 9. Shipbourne Village Hall** – Cllr Leach circulated a report on the village hall including a list of new committee members and hall management and maintenance. It was agreed that the Parish Council would take overall responsibility for the maintenance and finances of the hall whereas the committee would look to generate income to cover operational expenses and promote lettings. Cllr Leach suggested a meeting in January with the new committee. Charlie Keeling has agreed to look at the accounts and the Clerk will arrange a meeting in the New Year with Helen and our internal auditor to discuss ongoing banking and accounting arrangements.
- 9.1 Bank Mandate** – Currently Helen Leach is the sole signatory and Cllrs Oram and Dagger agreed to be added to the mandate.
- 9.2 Caretaker Fee** – The Clerk proposed that we pay a caretaker’s fee to Helen Leach who manages that hall and arranges all the finances. This was agreed and we will speak to other Parishes to see what the rates of pay are. Cllr Oram will speak to Plaxtol PC.
- 9.3 Utilities Update** – Utilities are paid via direct debit and Cllr Leach said that the electricity costs are high in the winter months due to the poor insulation in the building.
- 9.4 Committee** – It was agreed that we should have representatives from the Parish Council other than the Clerk and Cllr Leach to attend the committee meetings in rotation.
- 9.5 Charity Commission** – The Clerk reported that she had filed the accounts for 2022-23– Income £5,054, expenditure £3,672
- 9.6 Budget** – see above.
- 10 Communications** – *Circulated in advance of the meeting.
- KALC News & Training 2023/2024*
- KALC T&M Area Meeting 14th December 2023 at 7.30pm – Teams – Cllr Oram and Clerk to attend*.
- PPP Meetings - 8/2/24, 30/5/24
- Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan Consultation – 10th January 2024
[kent.gov.uk/KCWIP](https://www.kent.gov.uk/KCWIP)
- Ward get together with Hadlow and Plaxtol* – 25th January was the preferred date.
- KALC Community Awards Scheme 2024 – Clerk to make the application.
- West Kent Rural Grants Scheme
- KALC Chief Executive’s Bulletin
- Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- TMBC - Christmas Waste Collection details (<https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/bins-waste/check-waste-collection-updates/1>)*
- KCC - Family Hub and Commissioned Youth Decision*
- TMBC - On and off-street parking restrictions - Changes to parking restrictions in the Borough of Tonbridge & Malling www.tmbc.gov.uk/consultations*
- Tonbridge & Malling Violence Against Women and Girls Consultation
[Violence against women and girls consultation – Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council \(tmbc.gov.uk\)](https://www.tonbridgeandmalling.gov.uk/violence-against-women-and-girls-consultation)
- NALC - Update on pay scales – The Clerk reported that her pay scale had increased by £1 hour.

Signed.....Dated.....

11. Chairs Action and Correspondence - None**12. Finance & Policy**

Payment of Accounts – Accounts were circulated for agreement to pay: Cllrs Leach and Redman to authorise via Unity.

Parish Clerk Salary & Expenses December	£829.30
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(includes back pay & Increased rate NALC from 01.4.23)

HMRC – Clerks Tax & NI Contribution	£119.40
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Climate Action Day Attendance fee – Alice Dagger	£tbc
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Shipbourne Village Hall Account – (Helen Leach paid)

EJP Fire Protection Ltd – Fire Alarm Service	£90
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Octopus Energy (Direct Debit)	£116.31
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12.1 Timesheet Report November - Circulated.

13. Planning Matters

13.1 **Planning Applications** - None

13.2 **Planning Applications Approved**

23/02055/TNCA – Great Budds House - T1 English Oak- Fell and treat stump with eco plugs (broadleaved. Reason- Clay shrinkage subsidence damage at the property)

14. **To review submission to Parish January Newsletter** - agreed

15. **AOB** – Cllr Oram asked where the sign for the Chaser had gone (possibly rotten) and whether the sign board could be moved as they obstructed the sight lines. Suggested that Cllr Oram speak to the landlord.

16. **Date of next meeting** – Monday 8th January 2024

The meeting closed at 8.35pm

Signed.....Dated.....