

Minutes of **OFFHAM PARISH COUNCIL** meeting
Held virtually on **Tuesday 6th April 2021** at **7.30PM**

Councillors Present:

Cllr S Rickett (Chairman)
Cllr P Bailey
Cllr C Dyer
Cllr B Jones
Cllr A Marchant
Cllr R Taylor
Cllr C Unter

Also in attendance

L Mackie (Clerk)
4 members of public

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies from Borough Councillors A Kemp and P Montague and PCSO Sears. County Councillor Hohler had attended the earlier APM.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Dyer declared an interest in planning application **TM/21/00177/FL - Barn South Of Godwell Farm**, as she is a neighbour.

3. MINUTES

The minutes arising from 2nd March 2021 were agreed by all Councillors and will be signed as approved by Cllr Rickett at the next available opportunity.

4. EXTERNAL REPORTS

- a) County Councillor Hohler
 - o Cllr Hohler had provided a report at the APM.
- b) Borough Councillors
There were no reports.
- c) Police
There were no reports.

5. PLANNING

- a) New applications
There were no new applications
- b) Approvals
 - i. **TM/21/00167/TNCA - The Green, Offham** - Pin Oak T1 to thin throughout tree of epicormic growth and raise lower crown to 2.4m.
- c) Refusals
There were no refusals to report.
- d) Any other planning matters
 - i. **TM/21/00177/FL - Barn South Of Godwell Farm, Church Road** - Demolition of existing redundant outbuildings and erection of a new 3 bed/6 person single storey dwelling together with a 1 bed/2 person family annex, garage accommodation and associated landscape works. **APPLICATION WITHDRAWN.**
 - ii. Land at Aldon Lane, Addington – potential caravan site
There is an area of land at the bottom of Aldon Lane near London Road with a lot of building activity, and it appears that an area of hardstanding is being created. Addington Parish

- Council are dealing with this and TMBC have issued an enforcement notice. Offham Parish Council are liaising with Addington PC.
- iii. **KCC/TM/0202/2019 (TM/19/02397/MIN) – Blaise Farm Quarry** - Section 73 application to vary conditions 7 (documents & drawings), 19 (Combined tonnage) and 22 (HGV movements) of planning permission TM/12/2549 (AD/ATC Plant) and consequentially vary conditions 4 (surface water drainage scheme), 5 (lighting scheme), 12 (external colour treatment) & 18 (Advanced Thermal Conversion percentage inputs).
APPLICATION WITHDRAWN.
 - iv. **KCC/TM/0203/2019 (TM/19/02398/MIN) – Blaise Farm Quarry** - Section 73 application to vary condition 13 (combined tonnage) of planning permission TM/14/532
APPLICATION WITHDRAWN.
 - v. **KCC/TM/0204/2019 (TM/19/02399/MIN) – Blaise Farm Quarry** - Section 73 application to vary condition 3 (documents and drawings) of planning permission TM/13/3657
APPLICATION WITHDRAWN.

6. MATTERS ARISING

- a) Notice of Elections 6th May – Kent County Councillors and Kent Police and Crime Commissioner
This was noted.
- b) Request to put skip on the Green temporarily (SR)
Cllr Ricket gave permission for a resident to put a skip on the Green for gardening work for a short length of time, having discussed this with Cllrs Jones and Taylor. The skip will be removed in the next day or so.
- c) Fibre broadband schemes
Councillors did not want to take this on as a project. It was noted that residents can pay an extra charge to their internet provider to have fibre enabled.
- d) Village Litter Picking Group
It was agreed that the litter picking would not be run or covered by the Parish Council as it would be difficult to comply with Health and Safety, legal and insurance requirements.
Cllr Rickett has spoken to Simon Mahoney. Simon was keen to get litter picking underway, to take on the lead role for this task as a member of public and organise litter picking volunteers. He is working with the Offham Society. He has obtained equipment from TMBC. Anyone wanting to help as individuals or part of a wider group can contact Simon. He was thanked for his work in taking on this task and for everyone who has participated in the litter picks. Councillors agreed the village is looking good but it is a constant battle with litter.
Cllr Bailey suggested “no littering” and “no speeding” signs to be put up temporarily. The Clerk will look into this with Kent Highways.
- e) Offham Solar Park Proposal
The Parish Council is continuing to obtain information (**SR, BJ, RT**). If a planning application is made there will only be a short time to lodge a response, so as much knowledge as possible must be obtained now. Cllrs are looking at similar sites to look around. There is the possibility that Community Benefit Fund Schemes may still be running, which could bring a financial benefit to groups in Offham.
When the Parish Council has all the information, residents will be consulted to obtain their views. Arcus consultancy have responded to the Parish Council’s initial questions, with a carefully worded and non-committal letter.
Cllrs agreed to arrange a virtual meeting with Arcus Consultancy as part of the information gathering process.
Mike Rowe spoke on behalf of the Offham Society who are making people aware of this proposal, and different views are being given. He has liaised with the Tonbridge & Malling Ramblers Association who are in support of Offham’s aim of getting the footpath reinstated. Mike was thanked for his involvement.
- f) To consider ownership of Village Hall and Village Hall Car Park
The ownership and registration of the land should have been resolved a number of years ago, and the Village Hall Management Committee are keen to deal with this now. There are several

parcels of land involved and the Parish Council will need to get some legal advice to clarify the position. In the meantime, the documents held in the Village Hall need to be accessed.

- g) To consider possible return to face to face meetings and approve cancellation of monthly Parish Council meeting on 1st June 2021
Face to face meetings must resume after 6th May, but Covid Restrictions mean we cannot meet indoors until after 21st June. It was agreed that the 1st June meeting would be cancelled. The Clerk is meeting the internal auditor on 18th May. The external audit and AGAR form must be submitted by the end of June but need to be approved at a face to face meeting. It was agreed to hold that meeting on Monday 28th June at 7.30pm in the main hall. From July, meetings should be held in the main hall unless the rules change.
- h) To consider proposed lease of Cosgrave Field by Offham Cricket Club and agree actions
There are a lot of issues to consider, including whether there are any covenants which might affect the land, and the solicitor has been consulted. The Tennis Club have mentioned an agreement to reserve land for them for another tennis court. The Village Hall are concerned about parking and require restrictions to be included. No further action can be taken until we receive advice from the solicitor. Cllrs would like more information about what the cricket club intend to use the land for, so requested a virtual meeting.

7. PARISH COUNCILLOR REPORTS

a) Blaise Farm

(i) Liaison Meetings (02.03.21 and 07.09.21)

There was a liaison meeting on 2nd March which the Parish Council was unaware of, the details having been sent to an old email address. Cllrs have seen notes from the meeting and thanked Clare Innes for these. The next meeting is 7th September 2021 (**SR + BJ**).

(ii) Quarry

Gallagher have attended the liaison meetings in the past but did not attend on this occasion. It was reported that there is a formal request to include the Quarry in the liaison meetings.

The Parish Council has been in contact with Borough Councillor Kim Tanner who represents Kings Hill and has received complaints from Kings Hill residents about blasting. The Clerk will provide her with more information about the quarry and liaison meetings.

It was noted that the diversion of footpath MR286 is starting to take place. Cllr Rickett confirmed that the diverted route is through the field at the request of the Parish Council, as running around the edge of the field would make the route unnecessarily long and would blot out some views.

The quarrying won't reach this amended footpath route for about 20 years, so is an interim version.

(iii) IVC Waste Management

At the liaison meeting, the IVC site explained they are shipping material internally, so there will be no opening or shutting doors. They were obliged to do this to keep their permit.

(iv) AD Plant

There continues to be problems with odour from the site, although the operator has informed Cllr Rickett that the plant has finished final commissioning and is working with no issues or concerns. Cllr Rickett will liaise with the operator (**SR**)

It was reported that the operator has not shared the odour log they maintain. The EA is aware of the issues and is being proactive.

b) Offham Landfill Site

FCC Environment have been provided with a list of questions, and a response is awaited.

c) To receive reports about

(i) Offham Community Network

Cllr Dyer reported that the OCN is quiet, as most clients who requested help have sorted out assistance and support now. Volunteers want to continue the network to support wellbeing and give ongoing reassurance to residents. Rev'd Green has agreed to extend the scheme for

another 6 months. Looking forward, the volunteers are looking at future projects to help residents such as a Men's Shed to be held in the pub. More ideas are welcome.

The cake initiative led by Angela Unter delivered cake to 73 people. It was a lot of hard work, but cheered people up.

The food bank has been a great success, with the Village Hall sending out requests for items. Post covid celebrations are being discussed, with August bank holiday as a suggested date. Cllr Dyer asked the Parish Council to take the lead and Councillors agreed to consider this. The event would require input from the key village organisations and a co-ordinator should be appointed.

(ii) Offham Village Hall

Cllr Dyer attended the AGM and monthly Committee meeting. Janette Burnard has been re-elected Chairman, Ian Butler as Treasurer and Caroline Rowe as Secretary.

Tributes were paid to Peter Watson and Martyn Begbey, both huge losses to the committee and the village.

Valerie Patrick addressed the meeting and spoke of a memorial to Martyn being agreed by the Committee. He designed and managed the roof project, even working on the day of his death. She thanked County Councillor Hohler and everyone in the village who has supported the project. The delivery of the roof was delayed, so an alternative colour has been agreed upon which can be fitted sooner. There will be a big party when restrictions allow to thank everyone for their support.

8. MONTHLY CHECK-LIST

a) To note any Highways, Footpaths and Footway problems

There is nothing to report.

b) To consider General Data Protection Regulations and receive updates

There is nothing to report.

c) Website

There is nothing to report.

d) To receive reports about

(i) KCC Highways Improvement Plan (CU)

Cllr Unter reported this is evolving slowly. Making a 20mph limit for the area near the school or through the village should be considered. This was achieved for areas in Larkfield and West Malling, and we will contact them for details and advice. Applications for a 20mph limit may be more successful now on environmental grounds as they save emissions. **(CU)**

(ii) Maintenance contract

Cllr Marchant has cut the grass. He will complete a checklist confirming work completed. He will weedkill the playing field next month. In Cosgrave Field he has cleared the branches that were dead and lifted the branches that were over the tennis court. Cllr Marchant was complimented on the Recreation Ground looking so good, along with Cllrs Jones and Taylor who were helping maintain it.

(iii) The Pond, Village Green, The Pound, Cosgrave Field, Recreation Ground and Play Area, The Book Box and Defibrillator

Pond – David Frankling was thanked for organising a working party which Cllr Rickett helped with. All volunteers were thanked. There will be a small cost of concrete for the Parish Council for essential work needed. Vegetation has been cut back and there is a second sign. A goldfish has been dumped in the pond and will be removed. There will be another working party shortly. Cllrs agreed the area looks very good. **(SR)**

Village Green – Gallagher kindly delivered boulders, but not to the specification requested and they are too large. Cllr Rickett is arranging for them to be taken away and replaced with smaller rocks. Cllr Marchant will help move these and partially embed them into the Green at the edges to deter vans from driving over and damaging the grass. **(SR, AM)**

Cllr Taylor will liaise with Cllrs to clean the village sign and gateways **(RT)**

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The Pound – There is nothing to report, but the area is looking tidy and Sue Williams was thanked for this.

Cosgrave Field – This has already been discussed.

Recreation Ground and Play Area- Cllrs Taylor and Jones are completing the regular inspections. They have lubricated the swings, put laurels into the gaps in the hedge, repaired the temporary fence and mended the gate to the car park. The equipment is looking tired. The Parish Council is putting money aside each year towards repairs. **(BJ, RT)**

Book Box – There is nothing further to report. Wendy Williams was thanked for continuing to look after the Book Box. Cllr Bailey will repair the glass when there has been a longer spell of dry weather. **(PB)**

Defibrillator – The defibrillator was sadly used, and although it was not successful it did function well. Spare parts were ordered and installed so it remains in full working order. David Frankling was thanked for organising this and checking the defibrillator.

(iv) Trees

Cllrs want to protect the Wellingtonia near the school which is being damaged by surrounding trees and Cllr Marchant has offered to carry out the work. Clare Innes offered to speak to the school for approval to do this.

Cllr Marchant will carry out the work to the Pinoak in the autumn.

(v) Any other matters relating to Parish Land and property

Cllr Taylor reported that there was evidence of parties and drug use in the woods beyond the Church. The Clerk will notify the PCSO.

It was reported that sadly, an area in the woods near the Church which is used by the Primary School was damaged, with beer bottles and glass etc. Clare Innes will make contact with the school and put them in touch with the Parish Council.

(vi) Speed Indicator Devices

Cllr Rickett will chase a response from Kent Highways.

9. EVENTS

a) 2021 Fund Raising

This will be reviewed but it is not possible to make plans under the current circumstances.

b) Great British Spring Clean 28 May – 13 June 2021

Work to clean the village has already been discussed.

10. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

a) To receive bank statements, consider and approve financial statements (to be physically signed at the next available opportunity)

These have been circulated and considered by Cllrs. The statements were approved and will be signed at the next available opportunity.

b) To consider and approve invoice payments

The following invoices were approved for payment and the payments will be authorised by Cllrs Rickett and Jones:

Payee	Description	Amount
	Payments for March 2021	
Clerk	March 2021 Salary, expenses, allowance	£682.93
HMRC	March 2021 PAYE + NI	£159.96

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R Taylor	Reimbursement Costs - Laurels	£18.00
Surrey Hills Solicitors	Legal Fees	£100.00
Offham PCC	Annual Donation	£495.00
Unity Trust	Service Charge	£18.00
Ryarsh Parish Council	Half Share Shredder	£100.00
	Payments for April 2021	
KALC	Annual Subscription	£397.97
Waring Lawn Care	Lawn Treatment	£280.00

- c) To receive update on change of signatories on Bank Account
It was confirmed that Wendy Williams has been removed as a signatory and Cllr Bailey has been added.
- d) To consider End of Year Financial Statement for 2020-2021, to note internal audit on 18th May and to agree Date for Finance Meeting in June
This was discussed earlier in the meeting.
- e) To consider any other financial matters
There were no further matters.

11. AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

The Meeting concluded at 9.30pm. Date of the next Annual Parish Council Meeting and monthly Parish Council meeting: **Tuesday 4th May 2021** at 7.30pm

Signed

Dated