

Minutes of **OFFHAM PARISH COUNCIL** meeting
Held on **Tuesday 5th October 2021** at **7.30PM** in The Committee Room, Offham Village Hall

Councillors Present:

Cllr C Unter (Chairman)
Cllr R Taylor (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr T Benton
Cllr B Jones
Cllr A Marchant

Also in attendance:

County Councillor Hohler (7.30-7.40pm)
Borough Councillor A Kemp (7.30-8.00pm)
L Mackie (Clerk)
8 members of public

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies from Cllrs Bailey (illness) and Scullion (holiday) and Borough Councillor Montague.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. MINUTES

The minutes arising from 8th September 2021 were agreed by all Councillors, and were signed as approved by Cllr Unter.

4. EXTERNAL REPORTS

a) County Councillor Hohler

- She has met with Kent Highways at The Comp Lane crossroads. The white lines at the entrance are faded and there is vegetation around some of the posts. The surface looks worn and they will look at this and the cats eyes when they have a road closure. The white lines on the main road will be redone. There have been requests for a speed reduction, but Highways believe it is better to mark the turning well than reduce the speed and find drivers are not observing it.
- KCC have resurfaced 127 miles of their road network using a new way of resurfacing that extends the working life by up to 8-10 years, saves greenhouse gases as there is a minimum amount of waste to take away, is 5% more efficient for vehicles and costs £7 per square mile to do as opposed to £25-35. The resurfacing is at a lower temperature so emits 1.3 kilos of carbon as opposed to 9 kilos. There is a £50million pound annual budget to look after Kent roads. KCC have spent £11m to prevent potholes and reserved £30m for new roads and improvements.
- The footpath diversion around the quarry has been finalised.
- The opening of the HWRC in Addington has been delayed due to Covid
- Solar Park Proposal – KCC are still analysing the documents and not ready to do a report yet
- Offham was used as a good example of how to deal with food waste on Radio 4.
- Cllr Hohler offered assistance with registering the Village Hall land which is currently unregistered

b) Borough Councillor Kemp

- Planning Permission has been granted for a new eco café at Leybourne Lakes which is an ecologically friendly building and carbon neutral.
- The Boundary Commission have issued their draft recommendations for new ward boundaries. The draft is available for consultation at <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/south-east/kent/tonbridge-and-malling>. The proposal is for Offham to be part of a three member ward with East Malling and West Malling. It is important for residents to read the proposals and make their views known. Individual responses carry as much weight as a Parish Council response.
- There is no news about the brown bin garden waste collections. Any questions should go to Cllr Montague, Cabinet Member for Waste and the Environment.

c) Police

There were no reports.

5. **PLANNING**

a) New applications

- i. **TM/21/02143/FL - Moorlands, Teston Road** - Roof extension, loft conversion, extension to side, demolition of garage and replace with new garage and alterations to front drive
There were **NO OBJECTIONS**.
- ii. **TM/21/02186/FL - Ashtree Farm, Teston Road** - Erection of a permanent marquee on the site to be used for weddings and other events
 - This should be an application for Kentfield Farm
 - Entrance and exit from events should be considered.
 - There was permission for a temporary marquee which has lapsed.
 - Due to Covid, not many events have taken place. TMBC have indicated that a further temporary permission should be looked at to consider the extent to which there are "no reported incidents of unacceptable impact" to local residents.
 - There was uncertainty about where the marquee will be located and what it will look like
 - A resident reported that with the lapsed temporary planning permission there have been over 40 events on site.
 - Residents reported noise from events, including music, shouting and chatting which have not been reported to the applicant or to TMBC.
 - With Covid, events have not had large crowds. If they are granted permanent permission and with no such crowd limits, residents wonder what the effect on them will be.
 - The proposal is for noise to be reduced from 90 decibels to 80 at 11pm but to go on until 11.30. Noise will continue later than it currently does.
 - Councillors agreed that a further temporary permission is needed to allow further assessment of a more typical use of the site.
 - Cllr Kemp has asked for this to be called to committee.
- iii. **TM/21/02217/TPOC - Cover Point, Church Road** - T1 - Scots Pine, reduce in height by approx. 6m due to decay in a large bough that snapped off in the upper crown. T2 - Scots Pine, reduce in height by approx. 3m
There were **NO OBJECTIONS** but it was noted that the work has already been carried out. Cllr Marchant reported that permission was granted by the TMBC Tree Warden due to the rot in the tree.

b) Approvals

There were no approvals to report.

c) Refusals

There were no refusals to report.

d) Any other planning matters

- i. **TM/21/02100/FL - 1 Manor Cottages, Teston Road** - Two storey side extension (no objections)
- ii. **TM/21/02263/FL - 7 Pepingstraw Close** - Demolition of existing one storey rear conservatory and construction of replacement one storey rear extension (no objections)

6. **MATTERS ARISING**

a) To consider Maintenance Contract 2022

The contract was last reviewed 2 years ago and it's a two-year contract awarded to Cllr Marchant. Cllrs agreed that Cllr Unter should consider whether there should be any revisions to the contract before it goes out to tender.

b) To discuss ownership of Village Hall and First Registration

Cllr Taylor and The Clerk met with The Village Hall Committee Chairman and Treasurer. It is agreed that the land and Village Hall should be registered. The Committee have agreed to contribute 50% towards legal cost and 50% towards any additional hours performed by clerk

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Copy documents are held but no originals, and residents have been asked for information. A plan is missing from the documents held, but Parish Council Minutes indicating the intention at the time are available. Documents will be submitted to the solicitor to deal.

- c) To consider temporary Verge Signs on Teston Road – “no litter” and “no speeding”
Cllr Bailey was going to report back and this is deferred until the next meeting.
It was reported that Simon Mahoney organised a group to carry out a litter pick, and he was thanked by the Parish Council.
- d) To consider: Double Yellow Lines North Meadow and No Trade Zone by the Village Green
These two requests will be included in the Highways Improvement Plan.
There was a discussion about the pizza van parking by the Village Green. Having been approached by a Councillor it was not clear if they had a licence from TMBC.
- e) To consider maintenance of Village Sign
Cllr Taylor has obtained a quote from Maidstone Signs to remove sign, repaint and reinstall £1,120 +VAT. To fit angle irons at the base of the post, paint and re-concrete £926 + VAT.
Cllr Benton's father is a painter and indicated he could carry out the work for around £400. Cllr Marchant will remove the post and sign and it can be transferred to Cllr Benton's house where it will be painted. Cllrs thanked Cllr Benton.
- f) To consider the Queens Green Canopy Project
There was a discussion about planting trees for the Jubilee and Beacons which would cost £500, or alternatively a bonfire.
Cllr Benton suggested a village party for children in the day and adults in the evening, potentially closing Church Road for the event. The event could be organised with other village groups such as the Offham Society, May Day Committee and Open House. Cllrs Agreed to Cllr Benton moving ahead with plans for the event, which will take place on Sunday 5th June 2022 which is set aside as the Big Jubilee Lunch. It was reported that Cllr Benton had organised a similar party for a previous jubilee which was very good.
The Offham Society are planning another jazz event in Cosgrave Field next summer.
- g) Gatwick Airport's Northern Runway Consultation (to 01.12.21)
This is available online for comments.

7. OPEN FORUM - Public Participation Session

- A few weeks ago a property had fireworks until 11pm. Some residents were not given notice and could not prepare their animals. It was a well organised event with a high calibre of fireworks. The Parish Council will ask residents to notify their neighbours and also the Parish Council, who can circulate details to the wider village, if they are having fireworks so that plans can be made for pets, and to ask people to use animal friendly fireworks if possible.
- TMBC are still considering all responses about the solar park.
- Speed of traffic in the village is a concern and suggestions will be included in the Highways Improvement Plan.
- Cllr Marchant had hoped to cut the Pepingstraw Hedge last month, but will be carrying the work out this month.

8. PARISH COUNCILLOR REPORTS:

a) Blaise Farm

i. Quarry

A resident has expressed concern about a recent blast which was substantially greater than previous blasts and we have written to Gallagher about this. Cllr Taylor noted that at the Blaise Liaison meeting he attended, there was a discussion about breaking into the Wheatfield and Footpath MR 286 being diverted – material should be taken back into the hole to be crushed so it should be quieter. The noise has been bad in the last couple of weeks due to the wind direction and Councillors and residents reported hearing machinery noises.

ii. IVC Waste Management

There was nothing further to report.

- iii. AD Plant
There was nothing further to report.
- b) Offham Landfill Site (BJ)
The footpath needs clearing and this had been reported to FCC Environment. From White Ladies along Teston Road there is a footpath on the left alongside trees inside the fence which is impassable due to vegetation and the path from White Ladies towards the fields is badly looked after.
- c) Offham Village Hall
Bookings are heavy, the Committee is financially secure and film shows start again this Saturday.
- d) Wellbeing
Cllr Benton is meeting Caroline Dyer to discuss wellbeing. Cllr Benton was thanked for taking on this work. Cllr Unter reported that funds from the Offham Community Network will go towards the Thursday Lunch Club and the Mens' Shed, with the remainder being held by the Parish Council as project funds for wellbeing.
- e) Fund Raising
Offham Parish Council hasn't raised funds for a couple of years and we rely on fund raising to do things that we want to do. As a small village there is a small population so the Parish Council receive less money and needs to fund raise to achieve things that residents want us to do. We are hoping to sort out a race night in March/ April. Malling Lions have offered to run the event as they have done in the past. Cllr Benton agreed to work on this with Cllr Taylor.

9. MONTHLY CHECK-LIST

- a) To note any Highways, Footpaths and Footways problems (www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem)
There were no reports.
- b) GDPR:
There was nothing to report.
- c) To receive reports about
 - i. KCC - Highways Improvement Plan (CU)
A draft has been prepared, to include Speedwatch and Seven Mile Lane, and this will be emailed to residents for additional comments.
 - ii. Maintenance Contract (AM)
Cllrs have seen details of the work completed by Cllr Marchant.
 - iii. The Pond, Village Green, The Pound, Cosgrave Field, Recreation Ground and Play Area, The Book Box and Defibrillator
Cllrs commented on how good the Village Green was and thanked Cllr Marchant. It was noted that land opposite the pub had been dug up for water mains by one of the houses. The Parish Council had told the resident they could not dig the Green. It is unclear whether they have dug under The Green or not. Cllr Unter will make enquiries. Cllrs Taylor and Jones carried out inspections of the Recreation Ground and Play Area. They swept out the play area as usual and retied the football nets and inspection. The Book Box is still leaking. Cllr Bailey was to arrange repairs.
 - iv. Trees
Cllr Marchant reported that work to the Oak tree on The Village Green will be carried out this month, and he will take out the old Christmas lights out and put new ones in. Cllr Taylor, David Frankling and Steve Rickett will be there. Cllr Marchant reported that two trees outside the Kings Arms which were last pruned about ten years ago, a Cherry Tree and a Whitebeam, need to be pruned again. He will provide a quote.

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- v. Speed Indicator Devices
The Parish Council has ordered the pole for Church Road from KCC. Cllr Bailey continues to move the SID and keep it charged. A second SID can be put onto the HIP.
10. **EVENTS.** To receive reports on past events and to discuss events coming soon
- a) To consider running a Race Night with Malling Lions
This has been discussed.
- b) To discuss Christmas Lights and Carols at the Kings Arms
Cllr Benton will liaise with Jane Jordan and the Pub about a date.
- c) Friends of Kent Churches, Ride and Stride, sign on Village Green – 11.09.21
This event went well.
- d) KCC Road Safety Strategy Launch 15.09.21 (CU)
Cllr Unter attended this at Manston Airport and can circulate information to Cllrs.
- e) JPCTCG 16.09.21 (CU)
David Brazier, Cabinet Member, attended this event the day after the KCC Road Safety Launch.
- f) Lawn Treatment Due 06.10.21
This was noted.
- g) KALC: Men's Shed Conference 08.10.21
This event was noted.
- h) KALC – Introduction to Project Management 09.10.21 (TB)
Cllr Benton is attending.
- i) Steam Rally 24.10.21
Cllr Taylor and Jones will complete a Risk Assessment of the Village Green. Cllr Unter will make contact with Steve Rickett about cones and No Parking Signs.
- j) Play Area Annual Inspection 09.11.21 (CU, BJ, RT)
This was noted.
- k) KALC – Dynamic Councillor Training 09.11.21 (TB)
Cllr Benton is attending.
- l) KALC – Finance Conference 20.10.21 (Clerk)
The Clerk is attending.
- m) KALC T&M Area Committee 21.10.21
Cllr Taylor will attend.
- n) To consider Remembrance Service and agree laying of Wreath on behalf of the Parish Council Volunteer Flood Warden Training 6th October and 9th November
Every year a wreath is laid on behalf of the Parish Council. Cllr Unter would prefer that this honour should be taken by Councillors in turn. Cllr Marchant has laid the wreath for a number of years, as his father did beforehand. This year it is important Cllr Marchant lays the wreath on behalf of his father. In subsequent years, Councillors will take turns to lay the wreath.
- o) Volunteer Flood Warden training
Councillors did not consider it necessary to take part.
Emails have been circulated about a Community Resilience Plan. The Clerk will send more information to Councillors.

9. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

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

These have been circulated and considered by Cllrs. The statements were approved and were signed by Cllr Unter. There were no budget issues to be reported.
The second half of the precept has been received from TMBC.

- b) To consider and approve invoice payments

The following invoices were approved for payment and will be authorised by Cllrs Unter and Jones.

Payee	Description	Amount
	Payments for September 2021	
Unity Trust	Service Charge	£18.00
KALC	Training (TB)	£42.00
Ryarsh Parish Council	½ share Clerk's Training – Annual Finance Conference	£25.00
KALC	Dynamic Councillor Training (TB)	£60.00
Clerk	September 2021 Salary, expenses, allowance	£692.03
HMRC	September 2021 PAYE + NI	£159.27
Netwise UK	Website Standard Package	£300.00
Vision ICT	Biennial fee for domain renewal	£78.00
Vision ICT	8 hosted email accounts	£172.80
Clerk	Reimbursement – payment to RBLI for Poppy Wreath	£25.00

- c) To note insurance renewal 01.10.21

This was noted.

- d) To consider any other financial matters

There was a discussion about purchasing a Tommy metal silhouette from RBLI. Cllr Jones will circulate information.

11. AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

Cllr Marchant has volunteers interested in Speedwatch. Mike Rowe reported that the Offham Society will support Speedwatch.

The Meeting concluded at 9.35pm.

Date of the monthly Parish Council meeting: Tuesday 2nd November 2021 at 7.30pm

Signed

C. E. M. Unter

Dated

02/11/2021