

DRAFT MINUTES of **OFFHAM PARISH COUNCIL** meeting
Held on **Tuesday 16th May 2023** at **7.30PM** in The Committee Room, Offham Village Hall

Councillors Present:

Cllr C Unter (Chairman)
Cllr S Williams (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr P Bailey
Cllr A Marchant
Cllr M Scullion (arrived 7.50pm)
Cllr C Stephens

Also in attendance:

Borough Councillors Trudy Dean and Cllr Michelle Tatton, 2 members of public, L Mackie (Clerk)

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.** To receive apologies for absence and declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest.
Apologies were received from County Councillor Hohler. There were no Declarations of Interest.

2. **ELECTIONS 2023**

a. To note Parish Council Uncontested Election

It was noted that the Election was uncontested for Offham. Nominations were accepted for Cllrs Unter, Bailey, Scullion and Williams.

b. To consider and approve Co-Option of New Members

Adrian Marchant and Chris Stephens put their names forward to be co-opted. Cllrs Bailey and Williams seconded and they were both co-opted.

c. Signing of Declarations of Acceptance of Office by All Councillors

These were signed.

d. Appointments of Representatives to External Bodies and Co-Option of Vice-Chairman

Cllr Stephens nominated Cllr Williams for Vice-Chairman and this was seconded by Cllr Bailey. Cllrs voted unanimously for Cllr Williams to be Vice Chairman.

Representatives and Wardens were agreed as follows:

- o Cosgrave Field – Cllr Unter
- o TMBC Parish Partnership Panel – Cllrs Unter and Stephens
- o Blaise Farm – Cllr Unter. Cllr Williams will also attend if she is able.
- o KALC T&M – Cllr Unter attends on occasion and would like another Cllr to attend.
- o Highways Working Group – Cllrs Unter and Bailey, David Frankling and Steve Rickett
- o Village Hall, Trees, The Pound – Cllr Williams
- o Book box – Cllr Williams and Wendy Williams. Rachel Godfrey would also like to be involved.
- o Recreation Ground, Play Area, Village Green, Bus Shelter – Cllrs Marchant and Bailey
- o Speed Indicator Device – Cllr Bailey
- o Offham Landfill Site – Cllr Stephens
- o Wellbeing – Cllr Scullion
- o Defibrillator – Cllr Scullion and David Frankling
- o Pond – David Frankling and Steve Rickett. The Parish Council does not own the land

3. **MINUTES** To receive and approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 4th April 2023 for signature
It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of 4th April be approved and signed as an accurate record by Cllr Unter.

4. **EXTERNAL REPORTS**

a) County Councillor Hohler

There was no report.

b) Borough Councillors Dean, Roud and Tatton

Cllr Unter welcomed two of our three new Borough Councillors and looks forward to working with them. Cllr Dean reported at the last meeting that TMBC were to hold a meeting about the Local Plan, but that did not take place and has been postponed. There have been discussions at TMBC and it looks likely that another Regulation 18 document will be published including a further 40 or 50 sites. The indication is that this will be out some time in Autumn. TMBC must look at all the new sites in the same way it did for the sites in the first Regulation 18 document.

TMBC now has elected 20 Conservatives and 24 non-Conservatives (Liberal Democrats, Green, Independent and Labour).

c) Police

The Rural Task Force newsletter has been circulated. We have been notified that the numbers of PCSO's are being reduced, and those left will be joining various task forces.

4. **PARISH COUNCILLOR REPORTS:**

a) Blaise Farm (13.09.23)

i. Quarry - Blast charges have increased from 20kg to 25kg. There will be 6 in total and 2 are taking place this week. The Parish Council had argued it was inappropriate for only independent assessments of the first and last blasts. KCC agreed, and decided that each blast will be independently reviewed. The potential advantage of larger blasts is that there may be fewer. If Gallagher want to permanently increase to 25kg there will be a consultation by KCC.

ii. IVC Waste Management - There was nothing to report.

iii. AD Plant - There was nothing to report.

b) Offham Landfill Site

There are still s106 legal discussions going on.

c) Offham Village Hall

Cllr Williams reported that the Committee are looking for a new member to take bookings.

The Village Hall have asked if the Parish Council will resume their annual donation of £1,000 which was stopped last year, as the Parish Council could not fund raise due to Covid and the precept had remained unchanged. It was AGREED that the annual payment of £1,000 be resumed.

d) Offham Primary School

The Head Teacher had applied to KCC for a crossing patrol but was told they do not fit the criteria.

Cllr Unter has contacted Cllr Hohler about this. Cllrs discussed whether a reduced speed limit should include Church Road. It was noted that 20mph will not stop some people speeding. Cllr Dean commented that it should be the whole of a settlement covered by a speed restriction rather than sections.

Cllr Stephens reported on an email from the Senior Improvement Advisor West Kent who is impressed with the changes at the school.

5. **PLANNING AND LICENSING:**

a) New applications

i. **TM/23/00920/LDP - Stocketts, Aldon Lane** - Lawful Development Certificate Proposed:

Erection of a detached garage incidental to the main dwelling and driveway to provide vehicle access

There was a discussion. Cllrs noted the proposed garage is large and close to the boundary of the house next door, raising concerns about visibility.

ii. **TM/23/00948/LDP - Cornerways, The Green** - Lawful Development Certificate Proposed: Single storey rear extension

There were NO OBJECTIONS.

a) Approvals

i. **TM/88/1002/R18A – Blaise Farm Quarry** - Details of proposed trial blasts using 25kg maximum instantaneous charge (MIC) pursuant to condition 18 of planning permission TM/88/1002

ii. **TM/23/00372/FL - Hodges Place, Church Road** - Single storey detached building, ancillary to the main dwelling to be used as a carers annex (resubmission of TM/18/00913/FL)

- iii. **TM/23/00663/TNCA -Tower Hill Cottage, Tower Hill** - Applicants ref: T1 Beech, Reduce into rounded shape (trim sides and lift) to bring in keeping with garden and for aesthetics. H6m to 5m, W2m either side to 1.5m
- iv. **KCC/TM/0040/2023 and TM/23/00703/WAS – In-Vessel Composting Facility, Blaise Farm Quarry** – Construction of new storage bays and workshop building (part retrospective)

b) Refusals

- i. **23/00221/PREM** - Kentfield Estate – application for a second licence

c) Any other planning matters

- i. **TM/23/00624/FL - Wrotham Heath Golf Club** - Demolition of existing compound buildings and replace with overflow carpark. Erection of a storage barn. Installation of two Portakabins on existing concrete base (Revision to approved TM/22/01205/FL)
- ii. **TM/23/00725/MIN - Blaise Farm Quarry** - Consultation by KCC: Details of proposed trial blasts using 25kg maximum instantaneous charge (MIC) pursuant to condition 18 of planning permission TM/88/1002 (KCC reference TM/88/1002/R18A - TM/0051/2023)

6. **MATTERS ARISING**

a) Flooding and drainage problems – Teston Road

A resident has reported that since the granite setts were installed there have been episodes of flooding into the property and dampness in the wall and cellar. She feels there is a problem with the camber of the road. Highways engineers have assessed and said there is nothing they can do and have provided details of their complaints policy. The Parish Council can only assist by signposting her for help. Cllr Scullion reported there was flooding at the pub this year that had not happened before. There has been increased rain this year. The brewery added some drainage to resolve the issue.

b) Highways Improvement Plan

Cllr Unter been in correspondence with Emma Tilbury, the KCC Team Leader for the HIP's. Traffic Count equipment was installed in locations agreed with Cllr Unter and James Barnes and the results were presented at the APM on 12th May. KCC say that the average speeds are pretty reasonable, and are enough to consider a 20mph zone. The question is do we want them to make a more formal assessment? This will be a lengthy and complex process.

It was AGREED that Cllrs Unter and Bailey, together with former Parish Council Chairmen David Frankling and Steve Rickett meet with Emma to discuss. Consideration must be given as to whether spending time, energy and money have the desired effect of slowing traffic down. It has been explained that 15% of vehicles will ignore any limits or restrictions, but Councillors felt that residents wanted a 20mph limit and if 85% vehicles are slowed down that would be good. Cllrs want residents to feel happy and safe, but cannot assume that all vehicles will run at 20mph.

There was a discussion about reducing the speed limit beyond Fartherwell Road to link up with the reductions proposed by WMPC. There is an argument that on the long stretch of Teston Road 20mph is too slow, but people live on Teston Road with houses close to the road. It is difficult to change limits along one stretch of road. The simplest way is to start a 20mph limit at Spadework. Before Spadework it should be 30mph.

c) Village Green Lease - SGN

The gas regulator was mended by SGN last March but they had to come back and they put the Green back in good condition. They want to come and repair the equipment in future by entering into a lease agreement with the Parish Council over a 6 square metre piece of land. Cllrs AGREED to accept the £250 payment offered, and ask for notice before the works is carried out.

d) Trees in the Village Competition 2023

The Clerk has entered the Parish Council into this competition.

e) Farm Traffic

There was a complaint from a resident about tractors rumbling past at 5am. There was an informal agreement for them to go across the fields early morning when the weather is suitable. Cllr Unter wrote to the Farm, who immediately agreed to re-route the tractors. Cllr Unter also asked them to remind drivers to be ultra cautious further to a couple of recent collisions.

f) Defibrillator Training

Cllr Williams reported that training is booked on 17th June and 22nd July from 10-12 and Kathryn Frankling will be helping. There are defibrillators in the Book Box, at Spadework, at the Farm, and there will be one outside the cricket ground.

g) To discuss the fence between Cosgrave Field and the Cricket Pitch

The cricket club have done some remedial work to the fence. There are some cut logs on the cricket club side from when a branch fell. Cllr Marchant will clear those.

h) To consider Climate Change Strategy

Many parishes in Kent have many adopted the Climate Change Strategy. Cllr Unter will circulate details for the Parish Council to consider an adopt at the next meeting.

Cllr Bailey discussed sites for planting a group of trees together, creating a good environment and biodiversity. As part of National Hedgerow week, Cllr Williams looked at the hedge between the play area and Pepingsgraw Close. She will undertake a survey and come back with a proposal to improve it. There was a discussion about wildflowers and hedgerows in the village. Cllrs Williams and Bailey will meet and prepare some suggestions for the Parish Council to consider.

6. OPEN FORUM - Public Participation Session

Mike Rowe explained there is a dilapidated plaque on the fence between Cosgrave Field and the cricket pitch, for residents who contributed towards the trees. The Parish Council will consider whether to leave the plaque in place, remove it and keep it in store or install a replacement.

8. MONTHLY CHECK-LIST

a) To note any Highways, Footpaths and Footways problems (www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem)

Cllr Stephens reported potholes on Teston Road near Seven Mile Lane. These can be reported on the KCC website.

Cllr Marchant cleaned the drains here recently which were blocked with leaf matter and this may have been blocked again as there has been flooding here.

b) Reports about Parish Property and Land including The Pond, Village Green, The Pound, Cosgrave Field, Recreation Ground, Play Area, Book Box, Defibrillator, Speed Indicator Devices, Trees

- o Village Green – traffic going in and out of Cedar Lodge cannot turn easily without going on The Green and the grass there is getting worse. Cllrs Unter, Bailey and Marchant will assess.
- o Hayes Lane – there is a patch of mud about a foot wide being driven over. To allow cars to drive over it to get up Hayes Lane but keep it in good condition there is the option of concreting it.
- o There is a car that parks with its wheels on the Village Green. It was suggested that boulders along here would allow the grass to grow but prevent parking. Cllrs Unter, Williams, Bailey and Marchant will meet on the Green to discuss options, including planting.
- o Cosgrave Field – new benches should be considered
- o Defibrillator – David Frankling mended the broken case. He has shown Cllr Scullion how to check the defibrillator.
- o SID – Cllr Bailey moved it today and the battery has been recharged.
- o Pound – It is “No Mow May”

c) To discuss play area repairs and replacement plans

Cllrs Bailey and Unter will meet to have a walk around the play area and discuss. Cllr Bailey is completely regular checks. Cleaning of the equipment, benches and flooring is needed.

9. EVENTS. To receive reports on past events and to discuss events coming soon

a) Offham May Day 29.04.23

This was a fantastic day. Thanks were given to Cllrs Marchant and Bailey and others who helped get the Green ready. It was noted that a group of children also helped clear up. Jeni Sandford-Wilson did a great job organising the event and Darren also paid himself for safety workers to attend. Cllr Bailey will arrange for flowers to thank them.

b) Parish and TMBC Elections 04.05.23

These have already been discussed.

- c) APM – 12.05.23
Cllr Unter was congratulated for doing a great job at the APM. The presentation and pictures were great and the speakers were very interesting. It was an enjoyable evening. Cllr Unter thanked all Councillors for their support, and to Cllr Williams for providing drinks. Thanks were also given to the Clerk for setting up and to Cllr Dean.
Cllr Stephens was interested in the Chairman of the Cricket Club talking about their goals for the next 12 months. Cllr Stephens will draft something for consideration setting out the Parish Councils goals.
- d) Internal Audit 2022 – 2023 – 31.05.23
This was noted.
- e) Village Green Grass Treatment – 15.06.23
Cllr Marchant reported the grass is in good condition.
- f) Mens Shed – The Kings Arms – Every Thursday
Cllr Unter was extremely grateful to Saffi and Matt for hosting the Mens Shed. Numbers have never dipped below 10, but there have been up to 17 or 18. There have been 20 or 21 different attendees in all. This has been very positive, bringing people together and in terms of support has reached men who may not be otherwise be involved in the village.
We need to look for a grant. Attendees are paying £1 a week, but this doesn't cover the £20 a week costs. Cllr Scullion confirmed he was happy to continue running Mens Shed at £20 a week.
- g) 2024 Photo Competition and Calendar
The calendar will be delivered this week and will be sold at £6 each or 2 for £10. The Parish Council is grateful to those who have sponsored the calendar, which has almost covered the printing costs.

10. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

- a) To receive bank statements, consider and approve financial statements and to monitor budget
These have been circulated and considered by Cllrs. The statements were approved and were signed by Cllr Unter.

- b) To consider and approve invoice payments

<u>Payee</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Payments – May 2023		
SMLM Ltd	Kings Arms- May Men's Shed	£22.00
Waring Lawn Care	Village Green Lawn Treatment	£280.00
KALC	Audit Training 23.03.23 (Clerk)	£48.00
C Unter	Reimbursement Costs APM	£70.00
S Williams	Reimbursement Costs APM	£68.30
Clerk	May 2023 Salary	£757.49
HMRC	May 2023 PAYE and NI	£179.02
Clerk	Expenses April 2023	£9.10

Cllrs Bailey and Marchant will approve the payments.

- c) To approve Statement of Internal Control, Supporting Statement and Fixed Asset Register
These were considered and approved by Cllrs, and signed by Cllr Unter.
- d) To approve End of Year Financial Statement and Bank Reconciliation Statement 2022-2023
This was approved and is appended to the Minutes.
- e) End of Year Audit Update (AGAR) 2022-2023
This will be considered and approved at the June meeting.
- f) To consider any other financial matters
Problems with sending group emails to the village were discussed and the Clerk will look at alternative providers.

11. AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

There were no matters raised.

The Meeting concluded at 9.20pm.

Date of the next Monthly Meeting Tuesday 6th June 2023 at 7.30pm

Signed

Dated

DRAFT

Minutes of Offham Parish Council Meeting Cont'd

Offham Parish Council - End of Financial Year 2022-2023

Balances held				
Unity Trust Bank			£	29,990.12
Less: any unrepresented payments at 31 March 2023				
Date	Payee	Description	Amount	
			£	-
				29,990.12
Total Receipts for Year				
TMBC	Precept		23,519.26	
Unity Trust	Bank Interest		-	
Various	Other		887.50	
Various	Rent and Wayleaves		65.68	
Various	Village Projects		6,795.72	
Inland Revenue	VAT reclaim		1,234.93	
	TOTAL RECEIPTS		32,503.09	
Total Payments for Year				
Clerk/HMRC	Salary, expenses, employment costs		11,454.89	
KALC	Training		100.00	
Various	Clerk and Cllrs Expenses		201.47	
Various	Consumables and Office Supplies		184.31	
Various	Professional fees & Admin		933.02	
Village Hall Committee	Hall Hire		180.50	
Various	Play Area		2,050.16	
Various	Open Spaces		6,100.00	
Various	Traffic Calming		1,625.33	
Various	Parish Property		2,466.66	
Church	Churchyard Gardening		1,000.00	
Gallagher	Insurance		1,494.98	
Various	Audit		90.00	
Various	Village Projects		3,141.21	
Various	APM		298.70	
Various	Donations		228.98	
Various	Subscriptions		334.94	
	TOTAL PAYMENTS		1,727.27	
VAT				
			33,612.42	
Balance carried forward		Balance B/F from 2021/22	31,117.48	
		Plus receipts	32,503.09	
		Less Payments	33,612.42	
			30,008.12	
RESERVES				
	Village Projects		9,776.55	
	Play Area Sinking Fund 2019/2020		5,000.00	
	Play Area Sinking Fund 2020/2021		5,000.00	
	Play Area Sinking Fund 2022/2023		5,000.00	
			24,776.55	
	Balance			5,231.57
	Dedicated to Play Area	1,281.43		Jubilee
		400.00		Offham Open House

DNL