

Birling Parish Council

Minutes of the MEETING of BIRLING PARISH COUNCIL held on Tuesday 14th February 2023

Present: Councillors Mrs J Westwood (Chair)
Mr N Hewett (Vice Chair)
Mr S Hirst
Mr G Nevill
Mrs H Walker
Mr D Yates

Also in attendance: Clerk Ms J Miller, County Councillor Hohler.

151. Apologies for Absence

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and accept apologies for absence from Cllr Wright with reasons. Borough Councillors Kemp and Montague had sent apologies.

152. Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interest

There were none.

153. Approval and signing of minutes.

It was **RESOLVED** to sign and approve the minutes of 10th January 2023.

154. Reports

(a) County Councillor Sarah Hohler

Cllr Hohler reported that there are 9000 potholes to repair this year compared to 2000 at the same time last year and that Highways are doing their best to catch up. It was noted that across the County there are 3000 salt bins that the council fill with salt each winter and this costs approximately £75,000. Cllr Hohler asked that parish councils review the salt bins in their parishes and if any need moving or removing to advise Highways. It was noted that the recent drug driving police campaign led to 249 drivers being caught and fined. Cllr Hohler confirmed that KCC had approved the annual budget, with the main strain being adult and children's social care. KCC is asking central government to do more to support county councils. Cuts had been made to Community Wardens and the Member's grant. Schools and children are being encouraged to go to country parks and there is a focus on learning agriculture through apprenticeships. Youth hubs and children's centre locations are being reviewed to save on maintenance costs and to reduce carbon emissions. Photo ID for voting was discussed and it was suggested that any postal issues are reported to the election officer. Cllr Hohler confirmed that there will be no charge for road closure for Coronation events. The new South East Water treatment works proposed for Aylesford was discussed. Planning permission is being sought, and it is expected that it will supply 18 million litres of drinking water to Maidstone area. Buses were discussed at length and it was noted that redundant bus shelters can be ear marked for removal by parish councils. Concerns were raised that if shelters are removed future services could be affected.

(b) Borough Councillors Piers Montague & Ann Kemp

No report received.

(c) Kent Police update circulated prior to the meeting.

- i. Report for January received – no crimes.

- ii. To note response from PCC office regarding Neighbourhood policing review.
- iii. Stangate Road – Kissing gate and two five bar wooden gates stolen on 1 Dec crime report no 46/6214/23.

155. Open Forum – Public Participation Session
There were none.

156. Matters arising and last month's circulation.

(a) Ryarsh School

To receive any updates

It was noted that the school is continuing with community engagement and ideas are being shared on how to integrate younger and older residents.

(b) Village Hall access

To receive any updates on availability of hall – there were none.

157. Matters for Information circulated to councillors.

- 03/01 Ewatch 2040
- 06/01 Ewatch 2041
- 06/01 Coronation events
- 06/01 TMBC Corporate Strategy
- 09/01 M20 Moveable Barrier
- 09/01 January KALC events
- 09/01 TMBC empty shop front scheme
- 10/01 TMBC Corporate Strategy
- 12/01 KALC T&M Minutes
- 13/01 Ewatch 2043
- 13/01 KALC events
- 13/01 KCC public health release
- 20/01 KALC effective community engagement event
- 20/01 Becoming a local councillor.
- 20/01 Gatwick stakeholder consultation
- 20/01 KALC news January
- 20/01 NALC chief executive bulletin
- 20/01 Warning about parish.uk network
- 20/01 Ewatch 2044
- 20/01 Landscape services
- 20/01 Revenue estimates TMBC
- 20/01 KCC community services consultation
- 20/01 Nuventure buses update
- 20/01 Ewatch 2045
- 20/01 Southeaster penalty increase
- 20/01 NALC chief executive bulletin
- 20/01 International Women's Day
- 20/01 NALC Newsletter
- 20/01 Ewatch 2042
- 24/01 Emergency gas work A228
- 24/01 TMBC Corporate Strategy
- 25/01 Ewatch 2046
- 25/01 NALC chief executive bulletin
- 25/01 M20 moveable barrier update
- 25/01 Green belt petition
- 27/01 Ewatch 2047
- 27/01 Ewatch 2048

27/01 NALC newsletter
30/01 Bus updates
30/01 Becoming a councillor flyer.
01/02 Parish Partnership Panel
01/02 Bus Update
04/02 Ewatch 2049
04/02 How to recruit a diverse pool of councillors.
04/02 NALC chief executive bulletin
04/02 KALC community awards scheme
04/02 Conservation work available in your area.
04/02 Home to school and post 16 Transport for mainstream and SEND pupils public consultation.
04/02 KENT DAA showcase event.
04/02 KALC news February
04/02 KALC elections bulletin

158. Meetings

(a) Meetings attended on behalf of the parish council.

- i. Parish Partnership Panel 09/02/2023
It was reported that TMBC Planning staff shortages have caused long delays in concluding enforcement cases. Recruitment had been challenging and currently 8 out of the 35 Officers are Agency Staff..
Local Elections take place on 4th May. Election bill changes were discussed, main changes are the need to provide photo identity, accessibility at venues, and nominations for parish councillors.
The Local Plan Regulation 18 is delayed until June 2023. The Levelling up and Regeneration Bill due end of May is causing uncertainty regarding housing targets.

(b) Future meetings

- i. Snodland Asphalt Meeting 22/03/2023
- ii. KALC Tonbridge and Malling Committee 30/03/2023

159. Parish Business for Decisions

(a) Annual Parish Meeting

- i. To note meeting to be held on 11th April at 7pm prior to Full Council
Kent Fire and Rescue Service have been invited to give a fire safety talk.
Ambulance service unable to attend due to current strikes, St John's Ambulance contacted.

(b) Highways Improvement Plan

- i. To receive any updates from Cllr Hirst – there were no further updates.

(c) Bank Infringement

- ii. To note new director of Kent Highways invited to review the bank infringement – no response and further chase ups sent.
More chase ups will be sent.

(d) Local Plan

- i. To note update – it was noted that this has been delayed.
- ii. To review Green Belt petition and consider promoting.
It was agreed to promote the petition and sign on behalf of the parish council.

(e) Community Transport Grant / Bus Services

- i. To receive update on KALC T&M parish council initiatives – The daily bus service will be withdrawn in February replaced by a once a week Friday shopping service as per the bus update received on 30/01/23. Nu Venture are supporting the service until the Parishes take over the funding of the trial.

(f) Jubilee and Coronation

- i. To receive update on visit to Gallaghers to choose stone.
Cllr Nevill will share available dates with Cllr Westwood.
- ii. To receive update from Cllr Nevill on tree planting.
This will be funded next year.
- iii. To review coronation announcement and agree next steps.
It was noted that the parish council is pleased to support the community with funding or administrative support for Coronation events.

(g) Local Charities

- i. To receive update from Cllr Yates on hardship fund proposal.
It was noted that Leybourne Parish Council were unable to participate due to budget constraints. Cllr Yates will prepare a proposal for the hardship fund to be considered at the March meeting.

(h) Waste and Litter

- i. To note any updates. It was **RESOLVED** to hold the litter pick on 25th March at 09:30am. The clerk will arrange the equipment with TMBC.

(i) Civility and Respect Pledge

- i. To adopt policies and make the pledge.
It was **RESOLVED** that:
 - a. Our council has agreed that it will treat all councillors, clerk and all employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers, with civility and respect in their role.
 - b. Our council has put in place a training programme for councillors and staff
 - c. Our council has signed up to Code of Conduct for councillors
 - d. Our council has good governance arrangements in place including, staff contracts, and a dignity at work policy.
 - e. Our council will commit to seeking professional help in the early stages should civility and respect issues arise.
 - f. Our council will commit to calling out bullying and harassment when it and when it happens.
 - g. Our council will continue to learn from best practice in the sector and aspire to being a role model/champion council e.g., via the Local Council Award Scheme
 - h. Our council supports the continued lobbying for the change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge, including sanctions for elected members where appropriate.

(j) Climate Action

- i. To note Shipbourne Climate Change document and consider setting up group to prepare plan for Birling.
Cllr Westwood will review the data and prepare a proposed plan for the next meeting. Cllr Nevill is preparing a carbon plan for Birling Estate.
It was **RESOLVED** to prepare a poster for online and noticeboard to seek members of a Climate Change Forum.

(a) Website/Social Media platforms updates

To note the following added to online platforms:

- Road closures
- KCC community services consultation
- Bus service updates

(b) Parochial Church Council

- i. To receive regular update.

It was noted that a new vicar has been appointed and this will be announced in due course.

(c) WhatsApp Group Matters

- i. To note any issues raised on the Birling WhatsApp Group

There had been a fly tipping incident on Paddlesworth Road.

It was noted that there have been complaints made about the postal delivery.

161. Correspondence – all noted.

There was none.

162. Finance & Accounts

(a) To approve Bank Reconciliation January 2023

- i. Net Bank Balances as at 31/01/2023 £17,239.01 – noted.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the bank reconciliation January 2023.

(b) To note budget position year to date December 2022 – noted.

(c) To approve PAYE record February 2023.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the PAYE record for February 2023.

(d) BACS to be approved and signed:

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the following payments:

Payee	Budget	Amount Gross	Amount Net	VAT	Description
Waveney IT	IT Costs	£57.53	£57.53	£9.59	Monthly mailbox charges
Various	Staff Costs	£800.01			February staff costs
Laser	Streetlighting	£48.72	£46.47	£2.32	Streetlighting for January
Streetlights	Streetlighting	£205.50	£171.25	£34.25	Lighting repairs o/s the Willows

163. Roads

(a) To report any road issues and footpaths

- HGV sign damaged at Parsons Corner – this will be chased.
- Water leak near war memorial – the clerk will report on the SE Water website.
- Footpath safety matters: MR67 junction with MR61, MR70 field to Parsons Corner. The clerk will email Sam Honey at KCC to report.

(b) Road Closures – see website for details.

- To note temporary road closures affecting Birling: A228 emergency works

164. Planning

(a) Applications to be considered

There were none.

(b) Decisions by Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council

- i. TM/22/02353/FL The Willows 81 Ryarsh Road Birling West Malling Kent ME19 5JR Erection of double garage located at the Eastern boundary of property Refused on 21 December 2022
- ii. TM/22/02630/FL 1 Snodland Road Birling West Malling Kent ME19 5JF Single storey pitched roof rear extension with internal alterations Approved on 23 January 2023

165. Matters for future meetings.

The usual substantive items will be on the agenda. The Coronation will be considered at a future meeting.

166. Date of Next Meeting: 14th March 2023

Meeting closed at 21:57pm

Signed..... Date.....

DRAFT