



PARISH COUNCIL OF SANDHURST, KENT

Please reply to Catherine Catt, Parish Clerk, Old School, Back Road, Sandhurst, Kent TN18 5JS 01580-850295

Draft Minutes Annual Parish Meeting 27 July 2021

In Attendance:

Cllr C Robinson (CR)	Cllr D Rogers (DR)
Cllr L Erwood (LE)	Mrs C Catt (CC) : Clerk & Proper Officer
Cllr M Griggs (MG)	TWBC Cllr G Bland
Cllr M Hiscock (MH)	KCC Cllr S Holden
Cllr M Phillipson (MP)	PSCO Fuller
Cllr P Phillipson (PP)	

Item No		Actions
1.	Welcome	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. 	
2.	Apologies	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologies were received from Cllrs Horan & Kerry and RFO, Alan Crocker. 	
3.	Approval of Minutes	
	<p>To resolve that the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 4 June 2019 are a true record of the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cllr Rogers proposed; Cllr Hiscock seconded and it was agreed by those present that the minutes were a true record of the meeting. 	
4.	Chairman's Report	
	<p>A copy of the Chairman's Report is attached.</p> <p><u>Helping Hands</u> The Vice-Chairman, Cllr Griggs, spoke about the joint working which had taken place between the Parish Council and St Nicolas Church under the Helping Hands umbrella. Over 30 local volunteers led by Jane Burnham had worked together helping members of the parish with such tasks as shopping and medicine collection. Other activities which had taken place during COVID restrictions included</p>	

	the Sandhurst School Card, Wimbledon Tea and Apple Crumble October. Cllr Griggs thanked Jane Burnham for all she had done and presented her with flowers.	
5.	Sandhurst Parish Councillors – An Introduction	
	<p>As there have been a number of changes to the Parish Council, the Chairman asked the Councillors to introduce themselves :</p> <p><u>Cllr Christopher Robinson</u> was co-opted to the Parish Council in 2013 and became Chairman in 2020. Cllr Robinson said he was originally from Durham but has lived in Kent for over 35 years. He has a background in Finance and has held senior positions in a number of software companies.</p> <p><u>Cllr Mark Griggs</u> was co-opted to the Parish Council in 2019 and became Vice-Chairman in 2020. Cllr Griggs has lived in the village with his family for 25 years. He is a Senior Purser working with British Airways.</p> <p><u>Cllr Paul Phillipson</u> was recently co-opted to the Parish Council and is already well known from working in Johnsons, the local shop. He explained he has just left this position to take up a role with a local vineyard which for him is a happy return to the wine-making trade. He is Kent born and bred and moved to village in 2014 from Tunbridge Wells.</p> <p><u>Cllr Mel Phillipson</u> was recently co-opted to the Parish Council and is also Kent born and bred. She has raised 3 children and is married to Cllr Paul Phillipson. Cllr Phillipson is a Barrister and Law Reporter and as she has a particular interest in Planning, she is looking forward to working on the Village’s Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p><u>Cllr Mary Hiscock</u> has lived in the village all her life and was co-opted to the Parish Council in 2019. Cllr Hiscock has a keen interest in supporting village life and together with her husband is a tenant of an allotment garden</p> <p><u>Cllr David Rogers</u> was recently co-opted to the Parish Council for a second time and has a special interest in Planning. Cllr Rogers started the original Neighbourhood Planning process with Cllr Robinson and believes it is an important piece of work. It does, however, take time and he urged anyone present with a particular interest to speak to Cllr Mel Phillipson.</p> <p><u>Cllr Lisa Erwood</u> was recently co-opted to the Parish Council for a second time and is interested in supporting village life. Cllr Erwood is keen to use social media to make sure people know what is happening in the village.</p>	
6.	Guest Speakers	
	<u>Cllr Godfrey Bland</u> explained he has just become Deputy Mayor and will be Mayor next year. He said Tunbridge Wells Borough Council	-

(TWBC) has been drastically changed by COVID with many officers working from home. One achievement had been the support given to businesses by distribution of over £60m – an excellent job in difficult conditions. TWBC has managed to balance its budget but is struggling for money and hopes to make up some of the shortfall from parking charges. The current make-up of TWBC is 24 Conservative and 24 non-Conservative which means it is a hung council with reliance on the casting vote of the Mayor.

Cllr Bland said there were two main issues Planning and Rubbish. Planning has not been drastically affected and the system has continued to work properly :

- Sharps Hill has been turned down by a narrow majority but warned there will be an appeal.
- Ringle Green is still pending but as there is no Local Plan it could in theory still happen but a lot of detail needs to be worked out.

Rubbish collection is a problem as there have been issues in recruiting drivers and this is affecting TWBC's ability to collect rubbish. Cllr Bland added the amenity vehicle will not return in the immediate future and the collection of garden waste has been suspended for 4 weeks and asked people to check TWBC's website for updates.

A member of public asked why Rye Road has not been top dressed as it is an A-road ? Cllr Bland had to pass this to Cllr Holden as this is a KCC responsibility. Cllr Holden said there is a £600m backlog on road repairs but he would check the position.

Cllr Sean Holden started by saying he admires Parish Councillors as they are volunteers and said 'thank you' for the work being done. He was re-elected for the third time in May and said thank you to all. He then gave an overview of the year and the impact of COVID on KCC which has been at the forefront. Out of 6,000 employees, only 400 had remained working in offices and he feels we will see different working patterns in the future. He said 6m items of PPE had been delivered and despite the difficulties they had been successful in getting them into care homes. KCC has worked with local councils on the Local Enterprise Partnership funding which is money to support businesses.

Cllr Holden talked about the 'Keep Lorries out of Kent Lives' initiative and said the Government has promised to bring in new powers and tighter control schemes in Kent. There are also issues around parking and 4,500 lorries have been clamped in East Kent.

Cllr Holden reminded people Plan Bee had started in 2013 and had been officially adopted and launched by zoom in November – it aims to help pollinators.

Cllr Holden said traffic continues to be a concern and Vision Zero is looking to reduce casualties on Kent roads to zero by 2030. Members of the public said they were very concerned about the

	<p>potential in Sandhurst for people to be killed and felt KCC was not doing anything to prevent deaths happening. Cllr Holden responded that he is trying to get police back on roads which should stop people speeding – an anti-social behaviour. He said traffic and speeding issues were very much on his horizon.</p> <p><u>PCSO Fuller</u> held a surgery and invited people to come and discuss any local issues with him. He was very keen to promote home security and road safety.</p>	
7.	<p>Village Challenges – An Interactive Session</p> <p>The Chairman introduced this session by explaining the Parish Councillors would like to know which are the most important issues people would like them to concentrate on. The following issues were raised :</p> <p><u>Traffic is the main area of concern</u> A member of public raised the concern that new villages are being built and many more cars and lorries will go through our village – this is very dangerous and it is wrong to wait for a death before something is done. Traffic also affects people’s quality of life. Cllr Griggs responded saying the Parish Council had started to look into this and had spoken to KCC and explained there is a process to follow which involves crash map data and 3 serious incidents.</p> <p>Cllr Holden said a Speed Survey would be a way forward but will cost approx. £3k. It was noted Speedwatch makes regular checks and Cllr Holden said to make sure he receives any complaints which he will take forward. Cllr Holden had given a grant towards the Speedwatch equipment and PCSO Fuller said he would organise for enforcement officers to come into the rural area to support this action.</p> <p>A member of public asked why the speed limit could not be reduced twice a day when school opens and closes. Again, Cllr Holden said he would look at this and agreed he would like to see a 20mph by all schools.</p> <p>Another member of public asked about replacing the flashing sign and Cllr Robinson said this would be looked into again.</p> <p>Mrs Wiggs thanked the Parish Council and local people for supporting the Rude Mechanical Theatre again this year.</p>	
8.	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>7 September 2021 : Parish Council Meeting</p>	

CATHERINE CATT
Clerk to Sandhurst Parish Council

CC: For Information
County Cllr Seán Holden
Borough Cllr Godfrey Bland
PCSO Fuller

Chairman's Report 2019-2021

We called this our "annual" parish meeting, but in fact there was no meeting last year on account of Covid-19 and this year's meeting was delayed to avoid the remaining restrictions. So it's actually 26 months since the last meeting and that was chaired by Terry Hannocks who stepped down from the position of chairman after that meeting. I'd like to take this opportunity of thanking Terry on behalf of the community (albeit somewhat belatedly) for his many years of dedicated service to the village (9 years on the PC of which 7 years were as chairman). He was succeeded by David Leggett who had also served for many years on the council. Unfortunately, David's health was fragile and he retired last August and as many of you will know, he and his partner Sue recently moved to Guildford to be nearer family members. Again, I want to record our thanks to him and wish him well in his new home. There have been a number of other changes at the council since 2019 and I'm pleased to be able to tell you that we now have a full complement of councillors representing a good cross-section of the community and they are: Lisa Erwood, Mark Griggs who is vice chairman, Mary Hiscock, Julie Horan who isn't here tonight as she had to attend a funeral, Adam Kerry, also not here as he is in Devon, Melanie Phillipson and Paul Phillipson and David Rogers, not forgetting Clerk Catherine Catt. I'll ask each councillor to introduce themselves briefly in a few minutes but in the meantime I also want to thank Jill Oliphant-Robertson and Kelli O'Brien who retired in May this year for their service on the council.

So, what's been happening over the last two years?

Inevitably, the Covid pandemic has severely curtailed our activity for much of this time as most of the things we do require decisions to be made in council and council meetings were not possible for a long period until we adopted Zoom. And those meetings we did hold were inevitably dominated by Covid. However, assuming we are not subject to further restrictions in future, normal business has now resumed and the actions that were postponed will be revived.

Some of the things we were able to do during this time were renewing the car park surface by the Sports pavilion using road planings generated from the Rye Road resurfacing, completely renewing the car park in Back Road (out here) with new tarmac and edging and also commissioning a professional Condition Survey of our buildings from Lambert & Foster, covering this building, the sports pavilion and the toilet block. We now have a draft plan, prepared by David Rogers for repair and improvement actions covering the next five years which should enable us to keep our assets in good repair. This plan, when approved by the council will form part of a wider 5-year financial plan which will provide a framework within which annual budgets can be set consistently.

We have replaced two of the wooden posts holding defibrillators with steel replacements. One of the posts, in Bodiam Road, had been demolished by a vehicle and the defibrillator which was located next to the play park at Ringle Green was actually stolen, so we relocated its replacement outside the playing field so as to be better visible to local residents in the hope that that will deter future theft. We plan to take out a maintenance contract on the defibrillators to ensure they are kept in working order.

Some good news: In the last week we have finally had the see-saw and roundabout at Ringle Green repaired, having waited over two years to persuade the suppliers to do so!

Also in the last couple of weeks the remaining unused allotment plot was taken up so we now have full occupancy there.

And now some bad news: you will probably have noticed the vandalism at the pavilion over the last year or so in which the lower panels of each of the doors were kicked in one after the other and although the perpetrators gained entry, nothing was stolen. After those doors were repaired with more substantial wooden panels, the vandals have taken to systematically destroying the wooden railings at the front of the building. We have not made any repairs to

them yet as we are obtaining quotations for installing cctv cameras which we hope to have installed by the end of August. We have had to board up the toilet block for the time being because of repeated vandalism there and we will decide what to do in the longer term when we have assessed the cost of various options.

Still on the subject of vandalism, we have had persistent damage to the wooden fences at both playgrounds and our budget for this year includes allowance for replacing the fence at Ringle Green with a more vandal resistant one whilst we have already strengthened the fences at Old Orchard. Our budget also includes an allowance for renewing the surface around the climbing frame area at Ringle Green and possibly a new piece of playground equipment.

On the planning front, we have had three major developments proposed: Sharps Hill Farm – 16 dwellings – we objected and TWBC refused the application. It's now in appeal; Ringle Green – 15 dwellings – we objected to the application as submitted but are not opposed to some development on the site. TWBC has not yet made a decision; Stone Pit Meadows – glamping site with shepherds' huts – we objected. TWBC decision awaited.

If either of the big developments is approved, we have the chance of obtaining so-called section 106 developer contributions to local projects for which we have submitted a shopping list which includes some playground improvements and full tarmac resurfacing for the pavilion car park.

Speedwatch activity, which I help to run, has resumed following the Covid cessation and recent results seem to confirm the common perception that speeding has become more widespread. We have had two new volunteers who have recently moved into the village but we are always looking for more, as we are still a very small team.

Some of you will recall that back in 2013 we were doing some initial work on a Neighbourhood Plan but, after completing a village survey we were left with insufficient volunteers to continue the working group (only David Rogers and I were left). We plan to reassess whether it is in the interests of the village to revive the working group and proceed to prepare a full Neighbourhood Plan. Melanie Phillipson has kindly agreed to initiate this work and I know there are a few residents who have expressed an interest in being involved in this and so Mel will be getting in touch with those people shortly. Just to note that a revival of the plan will entail the need for additional funding which is not in our budget for this year.

We will be looking for volunteers to help keep the village tidy and we should be able to resume our litter picking in the autumn. No doubt Adam will organise it at an appropriate time.

Last year Cllr Sean Holden contributed £1,000 from his members fund for tree planting but for a number of reasons we were unable to use it last planting season. Now that restrictions are eased we should be well placed to get those trees into the ground this year. We have not forgotten, Sean! Thank you for that.

Returning to Covid, I know Mark would like to say a few words about the work of the Helping Hands group, so over to you Mark.