

Minutes of meeting of Godstone Parish Council held on Monday 4th July 2016 St Stephens Church Parish Rooms, South Godstone at 7.30 pm

Members: Cllrs Davis, J Gardner (Chair), M Gillman, B Hubery, J Faulkner, R Johnson, K Knox, M McLoughlin and C White.

1. Apologies for Absence: Received from Mrs D Grose (Parish Clerk) and Cllr N Child (Tandridge District Council)

2. Declarations of Interest: There were no Declarations of Interest made.

3. Open Forum:

Mr and Mrs Head raised the poor condition of memorial site in Paygate Woods to a Hurricane pilot shot down in October 1940. The land owners have given permission to allow the site to be restored and subject to the agreement of The Tandridge Council Tree Officer the work will be carried out free of charge by Connex Tree Care. Mr Head asked if the site could then be maintained by the Parish Council. The Chair thanked Mr and Mrs Head for all the work they have done so far to maintain this memorial. He was confident, provide the land owners agreed, the Parish Council would in future maintain the site. Councillor McLoughlin agreed to write to the owners of the land on behalf of the Parish Council seeking their agreement.

ACTION Cllr McLoughlin

Mr Stewart from Godstone Village School asked if the school could cultivate the grass verge outside the school. This would greatly improve the appearance of the areas close to the school and give the pupils the opportunity to actively do some gardening. He also asked if the Parish Council would be willing to offer some financial assistance to the school for this. The Chair replied that the grass verge was under the control of Surrey County Council and only they could grant permission. If permission were granted then the school could then approach the Parish Council with a specific request. Mr Stewart reminded the Parish Council that the school is currently oversubscribed and the school was looking at options to accommodate more pupils. He hope the Parish Council would fully support the school on this matter.

Mrs Brown asked if the parish had a Local Neighbourhood Plan. The Chair replied that the Parish Council had preciously looked into this but because of the amount of work required, (It can take 3 years, £20000 in cost and a local referendum to get the document approved), had decided not to produce a local neighbourhood plan. However, these plans now appear to be of growing importance and the parish council will be revisiting the issue. He added to the best of his knowledge only 1 parish in Tandridge has an approved local neighbourhood plan.

Cllr Windsor(SCC) advised that getting a 20mph speed limit on A22 through South Godstone village would be extremely difficult but she has asked for additional speed checks by the police to endure the 30mph limit is enforced. She is looking at getting the speed limit on the A22 through Blindley Heath lowered from 40mph to 30mph.

4. Minutes of Previous Meetings:

The minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 27th June were agreed and signed by the Chair. The minutes or the meeting held on 4th June were agreed with the following addition to 7.2.3 to clarify the background to the funding. "The £7900 that Surrey Wildlife Trust is requesting be transferred them relates to grants received by the Parish Council prior to signing any agreement with the Surrey Wildlife Trust".

5. Matters Arising: Nothing to report.

6. Reports:

6.1 No Clerks report.

6.2 The Chair reported he attended the GVA AGM where much of the discussion was about the cancellation of the Queen's Birthday event on the village green and the ill feeling this had caused. The Parish Council was of the unanimous view that given the weather conditions overnight and for much of the morning the only sensible option was to cancel the event. Several Councillors had visited the village green on the Sunday morning and confirmed the stages erected were unsafe/unusable and the ground was waterlogged from several days of rain. Weather insurance had been taken to cover the event and it is believed the GVA had submitted a claim for the losses. The Clerk was asked to investigate if the claim from the GVA included the coaches that had been paid for by the Parish Council. **ACTION** Clerk. The Chair reminded all Councillors to keep up to date with the safety inspections they are responsible for.

6.3 Cllr White reported that South Godstone School took second place at the Oxted Carnival for their costumes, he added that even with the heavy rain the children all continued with their display. He also reported that Tandridge Council wants to move to an all-electronic system for circulation planning matters. There is a lot of opposition to this move from parish councils as they lack the necessary equipment to access the applications. It is suggested if parish councils still want paper copies of planning applications there will be a charge, amount no known.

7. Planning.

7.1 District Council Planning Decisions

2016/617 Whitewalls, Carlton Road, South Godstone RH9 8LE

Erection of front entrance gates.

Approved.

2016/557 - Land adj to Clyst Hayes & north of A22, Godstone Road, Oxted RH8 9JU

Demolition of existing single garage and carport. Erection of detached double garage to north west of dwelling.

Approved.

2016/382 - The Studio, Godstone Place, 59A High Street, Godstone RH9 8LU

Change of use of the studio serving Stable Cottage to provide a separate dwelling.

Approved.

2016/68 - Oak View, Brickhouse Lane, South Godstone RH9 8JW

Erection of single storey front/side extension, single storey rear extension and first floor extension over existing side extension.

Approved.

2016/688/NH - 7 Ockleys Mead, Godstone RH9 8AX

Erection of rear conservatory measuring 4 metres deep, with a maximum height of 2.9 metres and an eaves height of 2.2 metres. (Notification of a Proposed Larger Home Extension).

Prior approval not required.

2015/1977/Cond1 - Ladyhaye Kennels, Hare Lane, Blindley Heath RH7 6JB

Details pursuant to Conditions 8, 13 & 14.

Approval of details

7.2. Current Planning Applications.

2016/1001 - 5 Salisbury Road, Godstone RH9 8AA

Demolition of existing garage. Erection of single storey side extension.

Concerns over potential increase in on-street parking due to loss of garage as Salisbury Road is already very congested. No Objections.

2016/1088/N - Tiffin Bell Cottage, Danemore Lnae, South Godstone RH9 8JF

Erection of agricultural building to provide storage for agricultural machinery [Agricultural Notification]

Secluded location unlikely to be highly visible.

No Objections.

2016/786/NC - 11 High Street Godstone RH9 8LS

Change of use from shops [Class A1] and Professional Services [Class A2], Betting offices, Pay Day Loan Shops and Casinos [Sui Generis Uses] to Dwelling houses [Class C3 and for associated operational development. [Prior approval Class M Part 3 Schedule 2]

Concerns were expressed by several Councillors about the loss of a retail outlet in village however the premises have been empty for some while and the economic viability of a retail outlet raised. Empty shops are not a good indicator for the village but it was felt more time should pass before any change of use. Recommend deferring any change of use until it can be shown all efforts to find a new retail user.

2016/828/NH - 65 Lagham Road, South Godstone RH9 8HF

Erection of single storey rear extension measuring 6 metres deep, with a maximum height of 2.8 metres and an eaves height of 2.8 metres. [Notification of a Proposed Larger Home Extension]

Unless neighbours have strong objections no comments.

2016/849 - Brook Nursery, Eastbourne Road, South Godstone RH9 8JB

Formation of hard-standing, erection storage container and portable toilet and 2m high perimeter fence. [Retrospective]

The site being used by a business to store trees prior to selling. Provides employment and brings business to the area.

No Objections

2016/Witchwood, Carlton Road, South Godstone RH9 8LG

Erection of detached double garage with storage over

Large site unless neighbours have strong concerns no comment.

2016/883 - 81 Ockleys Mead, Godstone RH9 8AZ

Erection of single storey rear extension

Unless neighbours have strong reasons to object no comments

2016//671 - Heath House, Tandridge Lane, Lingfield RH7 6LL

Erection of single storey rear extension. Changes to fenestration including new doors and windows.

Considered an over development on a green belt site. The property, in the past, has already been considerable extended and further development is not considered appropriate.

Object as over development.

2016/905/NC - Woodcote House, Eastbourne Road, South Godstone RH9 8EZ

Change of use from shops [Class A1] and Professional Services [Class A2], Betting offices, Pay Day Loan Shops and Casinos [Sui Generis Uses] to Dwelling houses [Class C3 and for associated operational development. [Prior approval Class M Part 3 Schedule 2]

The council was unhappy with the proposed loss of a retail outlet in the village. After many years of trading the business previously using the premises has only recently closed (in early 2016), it is believed due to the owner retiring. No serious attempt appears to have been made continue the retail use of the premises. Object because of loss of retail outlet.

2016/981/TPP - TPO 7, 2006 [T] - Street Record Rushton Avenue, South Godstone RH

Reduce 9 Poplars & 1 Willow to a height of between 2 and 3 feet.

The Parish Council will support and accept the decision of the Tandridge Council Tree Officer.

Blindley Heath, Lingfield, Surrey RH7 6LH NGR 537531.

Vodafone Ltd are in the process of identifying a suitable site in the Lingfield area for a radio base station. Please see letter.

It is believed this location is just outside of the parish and a matter that should be passed to Tandridge or Lingfield

8. Finance

8.1 Accounts for payment: 4 July Meeting

Staff Salaries			1096.27
C Aldous	Lease of Hilly Field Allotments		300.00
Mulberry & Co	Audit		283.20
Mrs Rodgers	Consulting fees - Burial Grounds	NOT PAID	25.00
Fairalls	Fencing Panels and Protector		163.01
Gardenwise	Godstone Green Cut incl. Green View x	600.00	
	Burial Grounds cut	260.00	
	Blindley Heath cut	300.00	
	Burial Grounds, middle section	100.00	
	Burial Grounds, front and ashes area x 3	225.00	
	Burial Grounds, old section	120.00	1605.00
	Maintenance Contract	248.00	248.00
William Way	Box Coach Screws & 3 Bags Post Mix		17.40
SOS Office Supplies	Drum Unit for Photocopier		10.74
Norton Anti Virus	Renewal of Anti Virus for Computers		£44.00
HM Revenue & Customs			£826.14

The June salaries have been paid in accordance with 7.2 of the Financial Regulations.

Direct Debits:

E.ON. Office Electricity to 14 June is £21.42. BT. Phone and Broadband to 17 June 2016 £99.51 VAT Refund £1,768.85
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The reason for the payment to Mrs Rodgers was not clear and as the Clerk was not at the meeting to give the details this item was not approved. The cost of the anti-virus software was also questioned and approval delayed. The Clerk was asked to investigate the problems with accessing the E.ON account and to look at the electricity market to see if a better price can be found from other suppliers.

8.2.

1.) Financial Report for May 2016.

The meeting approved and the report prepared by Cllr White.

2.) Bank Signatories.

Cllr White reported that new paperwork has been provided by the bank to revise the list of those able to use electronic banking, this matter should now finally be brought to a close.

3.) Internal Audit.

This was covered by the extraordinary meeting held on 27th June 2016 and there are no further matters at this time to be discussed.

4.) Queen's Birthday Party.

The only payment made by the council was for the hire of coaches and it is expected these costs will be recovered through the insurance taken out. See earlier Chairs report for details.

9. Greens and Commons.

9.1 Allotments.

It was agreed that a letter is sent to all the allotment holders on the Hilly Fields site to formally advise them that when the lease for the site expires in May 2019 the allotments will no longer be available. Those allotment holders still wanting a plot will be found one on the Salisbury Road site. The Clerk was asked to prepare a letter for approval at the August council meeting.

ACTION Clerk

It was agreed that the hedges round the Hilly Fields Allotment site are in poorly maintained and need to be cut. Cllr McLoughlin agreed to organise this.

ACTION Cllr McLoughlin

Letters have been sent to all allotment holders reminding them of the terms of their lease that requires plot holders to keep their plots tidy and cultivated.

The council agreed that a bid should be made to the Community Improvement Fund to improve the Salisbury Road site. Cllr Gillman has already prepared a draft submission and Cllr Knox agreed to complete the application by 15th July 2016

ACTION Cllr Knox

9.2 Godstone Green.

It was agreed that the Baptist Church can use The Green on 24th July for a 'Church on the Green' event.

Hurst Green Children's Centre has requested the rural bus is allowed to park on The Green near the sandpit on Thursday August 4th and 18th 12noon-3.30pm. The council agreed to this

request provided the ground conditions at the time are suitable. The rural bus owners need to be aware that The Green can get very soft in the area they want to use and a check must be made with the Clerk before driving in to The Green.

The poor condition of Needles Bank has been raised with the council. While Surrey CC is responsible for the maintenance little is done and given the prominent position in the village. It was agreed the council should approach Surrey CC and offer to take over the maintenance.

The Clerk is to prepare a letter to Surrey CC.

ACTION Clerk

9.3 Hilly Fields.

The council agreed that a bid for £25000 should be made to the Community Improvement Fund to help fund the carpark. Cllr Gillman has already prepared a draft case and Cllr Knox agreed to complete the application by 15th July 2016.

ACTION Cllr Knox

After discussion it was agreed that to minimise the risk on the council it would be better to seek tenders to construct the carpark against an agreed specification. The prime risk to the council under this approach would be the unknown of the soil conditions. To overcome this it was proposed 2 test pits are dug so the bidding contractors could inspect the soil conditions. Cllr Gardner agreed to do this in time for the bidding process. Cllrs Gardner and Knox agreed to produce the final version of the specification and would contact the planners at Tandridge to clarify any points of detail.

ACTION Cllrs Gardner and Knox

9.4. Blindley Heath.

It was agreed that because of the wet ground conditions the removal of the rushes from the pond should be delayed until next year. The area round the pond still needs tidying and this should be done during the summer months. Cllr McLoughlin will speak with Garry who will do the work under the maintenance contract. Garry will liaise with Cllr Faulkner on the details of the work. The council agreed up to £500 can be spent on this work. The refurbishing of the benches remains outstanding; this is another task Garry is to carry out.

Cllr McLoughlin agreed to speak with Garry about his workload as a backlog is building up, some delay might be due to the recent poor weather but this needs to be clarified.

No more information had been received from The Surrey Wildlife Trust about the ring fenced funding.

9.5 Tilburstow Hill Common.

The letter to all the residents of The Enterdent agreed at the June meeting had been delivered. One resident has complained about the condition of the trackway at The Enterdent pointing out that he pays a wayleave to the parish council. The Chair made it very clear that a wayleave gives a person the right to cross parish land and it does not place any requirement on the parish council to provide or maintain any form of roadway.

There are also concerns about a number of trees that are felt by residents to be in a dangerous condition. Following a site visit it was agreed that the smaller trees that are overhanging should be cut back and this can be done under the maintenance contract by Garry. However, the large beech trees that overhang some garages do not appear to be in an unsafe condition and it is more likely the residents are worried about the shading impact. It was agreed that professional advice will be obtained from Quaff to confirm there is no problem with these trees.

10. Burial Ground.

10.1 There are no applications for Exclusive Rights of Burial this month

10.2 The applications for consent to erect a memorial for Richard Houghton Grave 342 was approved.

10.3 As no quotation has been received for the repairs/cleaning of the war memorial and another company has now been contacted.

11. Office Administration.

The chair reported that the new administration assistant will start on 11th July. Councillors should, if possible visit the parish office in the next few weeks, to introduce themselves. He added it is important that the way the parish office is run should not default to the previous model with the Clerk and assistant Clerk having distinct responsibilities. Once the administration assistant had settled into the job there will need to be a second look on how we do things in the parish office. The Chair added that during the previous month the Clerk contacted a number of computer suppliers about replacing the office IT equipment but there was no specification of our needs. Cllr Gillman has now produced a draft specification but before any action is taken all councillors need to comment on and then agree the specification; it will then be put out to tender. All councillors are to provide their comments before the August council meeting.

Concern was expressed by several councillors that notwithstanding the decision made by the council to only open the parish office 3 mornings a week it is still opened to the public on every morning albeit with reduced opening hours. It was agreed that this is to stop immediately and the office is to be closed to the public on Tuesday and Thursday. All signs and the website are to be updated to show this and a sign is to be placed on the parish office door giving the new opening times. The Chair would speak with the Clerk on the matter. ACTION Chair

12. Correspondence.

There were not comments on the correspondence circulated.

13. Matters for Reporting or Inclusion on the August Agenda.

The Chair requested any matter a councillor wishes to raise at the August council meeting should be sent to the parish office and himself as soon as possible.