

STANSTED PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 7<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2024  
AT STANSTED VILLAGE HALL AT 8.00 PM

**PRESENT:** Cllr J Saunders Chair  
Cllr Kelly Curtis  
Cllr Peter Morris  
Cllr Daren Sefer  
Cllr Greg Whitaker  
Cllr Yvonne Tisson  
Mr David Rice Clerk  
Three members of the public

**Item** *Action point*

Minute no

**1 CHAIRMAN**

225 Cllr Saunders took the Chair.

**2 APOLOGIES**

226 There were no apologies for absence.

**3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

227 There were no declarations of interest.

**4 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 2<sup>nd</sup> SEPTEMBER 2024**

228 It was proposed by Cllr Sefer, seconded by Cllr Whitaker that the minutes of the meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2024 be signed as a true record.

**5 MATTERS ARISING**

229 There were no matters arising.

**6 COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILLORS' REPORTS**

**The Chairman suspended the meeting to allow TMBC Cllrs Rayner & Coffin to update the Parish Council.**

The Parish Council's project to install solar panels on the rear of the school roof progresses and a contractor will be appointed and the work carried out in the school holidays so that the funds are used by the deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

The Parish Council's Climate Action Plan, which included an initiative to use low energy LEDs on parish property, was in-line with Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council which will be converting all borough car park lighting to LEDs for which the government has provided £1.5m as a part of its drive to net zero by 2030.

The revised local plan 'Plan 2024' was discussed and the fact that the number of houses required to be built each year within the Tonbridge and Malling borough had been increased by 29%. Whilst it is hoped that this will not have a significant impact on building in the parish, as it is a 'national landscape' (formerly 'AONB') and

within the 'metropolitan green belt', there could be a focus to build in Meopham and Borough Green increasing the pressure on the local infrastructure.

The parish has made considerable effort to remove ash trees suffering from dieback, however, the Forestry Commission has changed its advice and now recommends only removing affecting branches and seeing if trees can develop a natural resistance to the disease.

The number of unannounced road closures was highlighted and it was noted that 35% of these were made by utility companies using 'emergency powers' to close roads without warning and this is being closely monitored by TMBC.

The Chair thanked Cllr Coffin and Cllr Rayner for their reports and reconvened the meeting.

#### **7 CLIMATE ACTION PLAN – Action 1 – Plant more tree and maintain hedges**

230 The Chair invited Mr Whitaker to provide an update on the status of the tree and hedge planting project.

231 Mr Whitaker reported that it had been decided to postpone the delivery of the 420 trees from the Woodland Trust until March 2025. The trees would be planted on Browne's Field and around the recreation ground but not along the path to the school from the Stansted Village Hall carpark.

#### **8 CLIMATE ACTION PLAN – Action 2 – Green infrastructure**

232 It was noted that a West Kent grant had been applied for the installation of screens and projectors in the Stansted and Fairseat Village Halls to reduce wasting paper and improve the efficiency of meetings for the Parish Council and those members of public in attendance.

#### **9 CLIMATE ACTION PLAN – Action 3 – Upgrade to low energy internal LEDs**

233 It was agreed that low energy LED bulbs should be used wherever possible and that this policy would be rolled out across the parish buildings and infrastructure where appropriate.

234 It was agreed that those responsible for the maintenance of the village should be contacted to ensure that they would install low energy LEDs where possible. It was noted that Stansted Village Hall needed LED lighting and this should be actioned.

#### **10 CLIMATE ACTION PLAN – Action 4 – Low wattage outdoor lighting**

235 It was agreed that the move to low wattage outdoor lighting should be rolled out across the parish.

#### **11 CLIMATE ACTION PLAN – Action 5 – Solar panels for the Stansted School Building**

236 As previously noted progress was being made with regards to the installation of solar panels on the roof of the school building in Stansted and installation would take place during school holidays.

**12 CLIMATE ACTION PLAN – Action 6 - Consider water management (rainwater harvesting may be an option for the school)**

237 This item was deferred for discussion at a future meeting.

**13 LONDON GOLF CLUB – “LONDON PROJECT”**

238 There was a discussion regarding the issues raised by the Parish Council which had been responded to by the London Project team. There remained concerns over the development from the perspective of the number of lodges to be built which seemed more than in the original plans submitted for review at the initial public consultation in May 2024. The Parish Council agreed to carefully review the planning application once it was submitted.

**13 REPORT FROM THE SCHOOL SUB-COMMITTEE**

239 The progress with the installation of solar panels was discussed under minute 236.

240 There was a discussion on whose responsibility it was to cut the inside hedge around the playground and it was agreed that, as the lease was on a full repairing basis, that this was the responsibility of the school and that Mr Morris would communicate this to the school caretaker.

*Cllr Morris*

*Clerk*

241 The Clerk was asked to provide the School Sub-Committee with the latest insurance policy to make sure that Grange Park were complying with any required actions.

**14 BLACK HORSE, STANSTED**

242 It was noted that, immediately following the last meeting, the Parish Council had sent a letter on 3 September 2024 to Chief Executive of Tonbridge and Malling Borough alerting him to the fact that the owners of the Black Horse had instructed the removal of trees in the grounds of the pub. As the pub had been granted status of an asset of community value and was within a conservation area any removal of trees would require prior planning permission.

243 A response had been received from TMBC on 12 September stating that they were investigating the situation and would take appropriate action and noting that regardless of the Tree Preservation Order, requested in the Parish Council’s letter, any removal of trees in a conservation area without permission was an offence.

244 It was agreed that a public meeting be held following the regular PC meeting on 4 November to discuss what action could be taken to save the pub for the village as the owners wanted to sell.

**15 PROPOSAL FOR INFORMATION BOARD BY THE NEW MEMORIAL**

245 It was noted that Dick Hogbin from the Stansted & Fairseat History Society had reverted to the Parish Council with further clarification on the proposed location and size of the information board to provide background information on the recently installed memorial and other local points of interest in connection with the Second World War.

246 The Parish Council, whilst generally supportive of the idea were concerned that the board should not be too intrusive or near the edge of the bank as this could pose a

danger to those standing in the road reading the information. It was suggested that further consideration by the History Society on the location and size of the board.

**16 MAINTENANCE OF LOCAL PATHS**

247 There was a proposal from Cllr Tisson that, in an effort to improve the stiles in the Parish, that an application be made to TMBC which provides £5.35 per parishioner towards the cost of installing stiles. If landowners provided the stiles or kissing gates the council funding could be used for the costs of installation. It was proposed by Cllr Curtis and seconded by Cllr Brooker that this suggestion be implemented.

**17 HIGHWAYS**

248 The Chair provided an update on the twenty-two new road signs for Stansted and Fairseat noting that these had been ordered and would be installed by Mr Morris.

249 The Traffic Plan, Highways Improvement Plan was discussed and the Clerk was instructed to make contact with the TMBC Highways Department to set up a meeting on the list of proposed improvements.

*Clerk*

250 It was noted that there was a Joint Transport Working Group headed by Tim Shaw who was the Chair of the Ightham Parish Council and contact should be made with him on the issues affecting our parish.

*Clerk*

251 The village gateway signs were discussed and it was agreed that these would be installed after the hedges had been trimmed.

**18 PLANNING**

**a Applications**

252 (i) There were no new applications at the time of the meeting.

**b Decisions**

253 (ii) There were no decisions to be considered at the time of the meeting.

**c Appeals**

254 (i) There were no new appeals at the time of the meeting.

**d Enforcement**

255 (i) **Field adjacent to Kit's House, Plaxdale Green Road, Stansted, Sevenoaks TN15 7PB**  
24/00145/EN

The case was being investigated by the Enforcement Team at TMBC. It was suggested that a change of use application would be required if the land was being used for keeping horses rather than agricultural.

256 e **Other Planning matters**

There were no developments on other planning matters discussed at the time of the meeting.

15 **FINANCE – Appendix A**

257 a **Bank Balances**

The bank balances as listed on Appendix A and as shown on the bank statements were noted.

258 b **To approve payments made since last meeting**

Cllr Tisson proposed and Cllr Morris seconded and it was agreed that the payments made since last meeting as Appendix A be approved.

259 c **Accounts for payment**

Cllr Sefer proposed and Cllr Tisson seconded and it was agreed that the accounts for payment listed on Appendix A be approved.

260 d **Other Finance issues**

There were no other matters to note at the time of the meeting.

16 **MANAGEMENT OF PARISH COUNCIL LAND AND PROPERTY**

i **Grange Park School**

261 This item was discussed under the report from the School Sub-Committee.

262 ii **Recreation Field**

It was suggested that more benches could be acquired and that these could be funded by parishioners wishing to commemorate family members.

263 iii **Play park**

There were no matters to note.

264 iv **Browne's Field**

There were no matters to note.

265 v **Telephone box in Plaxdale Green Road**

There were no matters to note.

266 vi **Maintenance and handyperson**  
The Chair suggested that the seat by the Plaxdale Green Road telephone box could be repaired and Peter Morris agreed to action this.

267 vii **Other issues**  
There were no issues to be discussed.

## 17 VILLAGE HALLS

268 i **Stansted Village Hall**  
There were no issues to discuss.

269 ii **Fairseat Village Hall**  
There were no issues to discuss.

## 18 WILDLIFE CAMERAS & SIGNS

270 It was noted that the cameras which had been bought were powered with normal batteries and it would be preferable to have ones that were solar powered.

## 19 REPORTS FROM MEETINGS ATTENDED BY THE COUNCILLORS/CLERK

271 Cllr Tisson reported that the Kent Association of Local Councillors held regular meetings which areas of common interest were discussed which was useful for councillors.

272 It was reported that a police initiative to stop speeding cars had led to a series of successful drug raids in Borough Green which had led to three drug rings being broken up.

## 20 VILLAGE NOTES

273 The new Village Notes had been well received and the new editorial team of three were thanked for picking up the publication from Hilly.

## 21 CORRESPONDENCE

274 There was no correspondence to be reported.

## 22 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

275 There were no further issues to be discussed.

**PUBLIC SESSION**

There were no issues subject for discussion.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 10.00 p.m.

Signed .....Chairman

Dated.....