



Alkham Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Statutory Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday, 13th May 2024 at 7 pm in Alkham Village Hall

Present: Alkham Parish Councillors: D Barnard Chairman, S Edwards, G Kaile, T Johns, C Webber.
In Attendance: Irene Bowie (Parish Clerk) and Members of the Public
DDC Councillor M Hibbert.

1. **To elect a Chairman and receive the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office**
RESOLVED: Councillor Barnard was elected as the Chairman and signed the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

2. **To elect a Vice Chairman and receive the Vice Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office**
RESOLVED: Councillor Tapsell was elected as the Vice Chairman.

3. **Apologies and Declarations.**

3.1 Apologies for absence received and confirmed by the Council Members who cannot attend a meeting shall tender their apologies to the Parish Clerk prior to the meetings, under Section 75(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, the members present must decide whether the reason(s) for a member's absence shall be accepted.

Apologies were received from KCC Councillor Beaney.

RESOLVED: To accept the apologies and reasons given by Councillor Tapsell and Councillor Libaert.

3.2 Declaration of Changes to the Register of Interests. There were none.

3.3 To receive Declarations of Interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda. In accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members and in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 in respect of officers. There were none.

3.4 Requests for Dispensations. There were none.

3.5 Declarations of Lobbying. There were none.

4. **Public comments and observations. (Maximum 15 minutes)**

The meeting will be adjourned to allow members of the public to speak. Individuals may speak for up to three minutes, at the discretion of the Chairman, on agenda items only. The minute book will be closed.

- Trees and bushes at Newlyn Meadows need cleared
- Clearing of the Ditch
- Path from Alkham to the garden Centre overgrown
- Pavement parking blocking pedestrian access.

5. **Reports from external parties (if present).**

Kent County Councillor David Beaney, Dover District Councillor Martin Hibbert, PC Ellis.

PC Ellis gave her report to the Annual Parish Meeting. She stated that the Police were aware of the Traffic Issues in Alkham and that she would attend and assist with some Speed Watch Sessions.

DDC Councillor Hibbert spoke to his report. (Appendix 1)

6. **Allocation of Responsibilities**

6.1 Byways : Councillor Tapsell

6.2 Drainage and Flood Wardens: Councillors Barnard and Libaert.

6.3 KALC Area Representative: Councillor Tapsell.

7. **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting.**

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 4th of March 2024 were taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

8. **Reports: (On matters not included in other agenda items)**

8.1 Chairmans Report. Matters covered elsewhere on the agenda.

- 8.2 Byways. No Report
- 8.4 Drainage and Flood Warden.
 - Village Flood measures need maintenance during the summer
 - Annual Maintenance of the Swale by KCC to be followed up.
- 8.3 KALC Area Representative. No report
- 8.5 Parish Clerk. Matters covered elsewhere on the agenda.
- 8.6 Parish Councillors. Matters covered elsewhere on the agenda

9. Finance:

9.1 To receive and authorise payments listed on the schedule (to be provided at the meeting)

	Description	£
Staff Costs		Confidential
Harmer	Village Maintenance playground Inspections	309.60
Easy PC	Accounting Software	78.00
KALC	Membership	295.28
Ionos	April and May 2024	74.40
Royal Mail PO Box	PO Box Deliver	424.20

- 9.2 Late Payment Request/s to be discussed for approval and payment. Bartletts Tree Survey 2023/24 Accounts £650 +V
- 9.3 To note receipts of Income 2024/25. These were reported as £19,127.61 (£16,755 precept, £72.61 Bank Interest), £300 KCC Members Grant for Body Cams, £2000 KCC Members Grant towards new Play Equipment.) Councillors extended their thanks to KCC Councillor Beaney for his assistance.
- 9.4 To receive the bank reconciliation. The Bank reconciliation to the 31st March 2024 was noted as £39,289.34.
- 9.5 To receive the funds from the Parish Council Quiz held on the 3rd of May 2024 Councillor Webber reported that the takings were £620. The costs were £40. Net Takings £580. These monies will be ring-fenced for the Playground Fund.
- 9.6 To consider Unity Bank:
RESOLVED:
1. The Parish Council would switch from HSBC to Unity Bank.
2. A current and a savings account would be opened.
3. The Parish Council would apply for a Payment Card
4. All Councillors would be signatories.
- 9.7 To consider a Policy and Statement of Internal Control for 2024/25. Defer to the next meeting.
- 9.8 To review the APC Fixed Asset Register 31st March 2024 (new assets updated during the year)
RESOLVED: To agree and accept the Asset Register.
- 9.9 To receive and consider the Insurance renewal quotation.
RESOLVED: To accept the quotation from Clear Councils Insurance of £696.28 on a three-Year deal.

10. Annual Review of Parish Council Policies and Procedures.

- 10.1 Standing Orders
- 10.2 Financial Regulations
- 10.3 Model Publication Scheme

- 10.4 GDPR Document Retention Policy
- 10.5 Freedom of Information
- 10.6 Code of Conduct

- 10.7 Civility and Respect
- 10.8 Complaints Handling Policy
- 10.9 Volunteer Policy
- 10.10 Habitual or Vexatious Complaints Policy
- 10.11 Scheme of Delegation
- 10.12 Social Media and Website Policy
- 10.13 Co-Option Policy
- 10.14 Equality and Diversity Policy
- 10.15 Email Policy
- 10.16 Dignity at Work /Bullying and Harassment Policy
- 10.17 Grievance Procedure
- 10.18 Disciplinary Procedure
- 10.19 Grant Policy
- 10.20 Risk Assessment Policy and Register
- 10.21 Communications Policy
- 10.22 Working Groups Protocol

RESOLVED: All policies were re-adopted.

11. Planning:

- 11.1 To table planning applications received for consideration:
 - 11.1.1 24/00429 Land Adj To Great Everden Manor Lockering Lane Alkham CT15 7EH
Installation of drainage treatment plant.
RESOLVED: APC Objection.
- 11.2 To Table Planning Applications dealt with since the last meeting. There were none.
- 11.3 To table decisions by Dover District Council (DDC) since the last meeting. There were none.
- 11.4 To table late planning matters: There were none.

12. Working Groups

To consider the following working groups:

- 12.1 Highways Working Group
 - 12.1.1 To review and agree the Terms of Reference.
RESOLVED: To re-adopt the Terms of Reference.
 - 12.1.2 To agree members. Councillors Barnard, Edwards and Johns.
Co-opted member Mr G Jones
 - 12.1.3 To receive reports and recommendations.
Awaiting dates for a meeting to discuss what the Parish Council can have in terms of Highway Improvements. Members expressed concerns that the PC, under advice, from KCC Highways paid £600 for a design plan which was then rejected by Highways. The Parish Council would attempt to get the funds back.
AGREED: The analysis of the recent KCC Highways Traffic Survey would be placed on the Parish Council Website,
- 12.2 Communications and Involvement Working Group
 - 12.2.1 To review and agree the Terms of Reference. **To re-adopt the Terms of Reference.**
 - 12.2.2 To agree members. Councillors Barnard, Kaile and Johns.
 - 12.2.3 To receive reports and recommendations. The group will continue to identify ways to improve communication with the community.
- 12.3 Parish Plan Evolution and Delivery Working Group.
 - 12.3.1 To review and agree the Terms of Reference **To re-adopt the Terms of Reference.**
 - 12.3.2 To agree members. Councillors Barnard and Johns.
 - 12.3.3 To receive reports and recommendations. Clerk to follow up with DDC to get the process started.

12.4 Green Spaces and Environment Working Group.

12.4.1 To review and agree the Terms of Reference. **To re-adopt the Terms of Reference.**

12.4.2 To agree members. Councillors Libaert and Webber.

12.4.3 To receive reports and recommendations.

Reported on funds raised from the quiz night to for the playground fund. Will look at grant applications. Meetings with trees surgeons for the crown lifting works required on three trees which had approval from DDC.

AGREED:

1. Councillor Webber to re-contact one of the contractors to clarify the quote for the crown lifting work.

2. Additional Quotes will be sought for the larger body of work.

It was also AGREED:

1. That one of the hazard signs for the ditch would be moved to identify the unmarked gas main outside Valley Cottage.

2. Councillor Johns will report this to the gas board.

Highland Plaques on the Village Green to be reviewed at a later meeting.

13. To receive the Monthly Playground Inspection Report.

Received and noted.

14. To receive the Tree Survey and agree on a schedule of work. The Tree survey was received and accepted. Further discussed under agenda item 17.2.

15. To consider the Dover Local Plan Main Modifications Consultation. AGREED: Not to comment.

16. Correspondence:

16.1 To table items of late correspondence :

16.2 Items circulated.

16.2.1 Latest alerts from Kent Trading Standards

16.2.2 Hello from Transport for the South East and our Your Voices survey now live!

16.2.3 Objections and how they relate to AONB Management Plan. DDC Councillor Hibbert

16.2.4 Dover District Neighbourhood Watch

16.2.5 DDC Register for our solar panel scheme

16.2.6 DOVER DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN – MAIN MODIFICATIONS CONSULTATION

16.2.7 Save Our Buses

16.2.8 KALC Area Committee AGM and Committee Meeting Minutes

All correspondence noted.

17. Consideration of items to be taken in private (Exclusion of Public and Press):

There are only a few reasons as to why, legally, the public and press can be excluded from a meeting. The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Sec 1 (2) states "A body may, by resolution, exclude the public from a meeting (whether during the whole or part of the proceedings) whenever publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons stated in the resolution and arising from the nature of that business or of the proceedings; and where such a resolution is passed, this Act shall not require the meeting to be open to the public during proceedings to which the resolution applies." It is generally considered acceptable to exclude the press and public if the agenda item relates to the consideration of tenders, leases, purchases of assets, for matters relating to staffing covered by the data Protection Act and to consider complaints against the council or a code of conduct complaint.

17.1 To consider quotations for the Play Area:

AGREED:

1. The Rocking Horse, Jungle Gym and Swings will remain.

2. Identify and apply for grants.

3. Slide to be removed.

4. To utilise Playdale but further work will be done to review costs and options for full Parish Council review.

17.2 To consider quotations for Tree Works.

RESOLVED: Additional quotes will be sought for the main body of works.

17.3 Freedom of Information Requests (FOI's) - An update on the current FOI's was given by the Clerk

18. Agenda Items for the next meeting:

Meeting Dates 2023: 24th June, 4th September, 6th November.

These minutes are not a verbatim record of the meeting, but a record of decisions made.

There being no further business to be transacted, the Chairman closed the meeting at 21:20 pm.

Signed on behalf of the Parish Council

Chairman: Name

Signature:

Date:

Ward Summary Report – March 2024

Transport

TAP

Still in a state of flux. Strong efforts are being made by DDC to engage with the prime movers to focus on the upcoming challenges. DDC are seeking better engagement with Neil Baker, KCC Portfolio Holder for Transport, Lisa Guthrie, Head of KRF (Kent Resilient Forum), and Simon Jones, Strategic Director of KCC.

Still no move on the promised review of Operation Fennel despite DDC continuing raised concerns around the forthcoming summer period and bringing exceptional traffic increases with the Paris Olympics and Euro Finals. Quickly followed by real possibilities of the implementation of the of EES (more details under next heading).

The number of occasions when TAP is being activated remains relatively low.

EES (European Entry and Exit System)

There are growing concerns that the prospect of its implementation will be in October 2024. There are a range of concerns around, infrastructure, IT resourcing and hardware, coupled with finding out how the system will actually work to help towards negotiating viable contingency planning.

The probability is that non-EU citizens will have to input their advanced passenger information on a Schengen website before they travel. However, they must register their biometrics at the port b before they can depart the country. A DHB contingency plan is for this to be done at the Western Docks and there to be a secure lane for cars and coaches along Townhall St for them to then proceed to the outbound.

It can be seen that there is much work still to be done, and this has been robustly taken up by our local MP Natalie Elphicke who has called for urgent investment to ensure that the Port of Dover is ready for the new EU border checks. Recent related press releases from the MP s office have been emailed out to ward PCs for circulation to councillors.

ENVIROMENTAL SERVICES

Port Health

Include in this summary because of the DDC Budget impact and raised concerns.

Some background information.

DEFRA has decided that all Port Health checks on goods entering the UK will be undertaken at Sevington. However, this will leave the Port Health authority with the task of undertaking checks on illicit meat intercepted by Border Force at Dover.

Funding of four million pounds has previously been provided to DDC for Port Health since the outbreak of African Swine flu (ASF). £2.8 million has now been withdrawn leaving DDC to cover the shortfall from their reserves. DEFRA are prepared to negotiate over future funding but DDC disengaged on the 14th of January and are threatening legal action.

This current stance has raised many concerns within the district. I have shared the cabinet in opposition concerns with PC clerks for sharing to councillors.

Our local MP has been working closely with both DEFRA and the Dover Port Health team to make the case for the right outcome not only for Dover but for the county as a whole.

An interesting point, DEFRA plan to keep the Bastion Point port health facility on hold while the new checks come not place before making a final decision about it. The facility is brand new and unused.

Cllr Martin Hibbert

Alkham, Capel Le Ferne & Hougham Without

18/03/2024