

**MINUTES OF YALDING PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY 16 APRIL 2024 AT 7.00 PM IN YALDING VILLAGE HALL**

PRESENT

Geraldine Brown (Chairman)
June Chapman (JC)
Ken Gough (KG)
Dee Ann Stead (DS)

Jason Bryant (JB)
Sue Gerrish (SG)
Andy Sanders (AS)
Joe Westgate (JW)

DECLARATION OF INTENTION TO RECORD PROCEEDINGS

There was none declared.

PUBLIC SESSION

There were 12 members of the public present. Two who had asked to present on a planning application, not yet received from Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) on Vicarage Road.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

All Councillors were present.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST OF COUNCILLORS IN ANY ITEM

2.1. DECLARATION OF CHANGES TO THE REGISTER OF INTERESTS

None were declared.

2.2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

The Chairman and KG declared an interest in agenda item 12.2 as they had bills for payment.

2.3. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

None were requested.

2.4. DECLARATION OF ANY GIFTS RECEIVED

None were declared.

3. DECISION TO TAKE AGENDA ITEMS UNDER CLOSED SESSION

Due to principal authority requirements and receipt of sensitive information, it was resolved to take item 22 to 24 in Closed Session.

4. TO APPROVE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 05 MARCH 2024

It was proposed DS seconded JC and unanimously resolved that the minutes be signed as a correct record.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

5.1. £10,000 FLOOD PRIZE STILL TO SPEND

The Chairman has met with Grant Brooker from Kent Fire & Rescue Service (KFRS) to look at locations for flood gates and awaits his feedback. KFRS have asked for additional information. Grant Brooker has retired from general duties but is still heading-up flood actions. The Chairman has spoken with Laddingford Engineering with regard to the gates and they have sent an example photograph of a road closure in Somerset.

5.2. FRUIT TREES FOR THE FEN

A site meeting has been held and MBC think they will be able to provide a grant to Medway Valley Countryside Partnership (MVCP) for the work, however permission is required from the land holder. The landholder is being cautious at the moment. Awaiting The Chairman to confirm. The Chairman will talk to landowner at the AGM.

6. POLICE MATTERS

The Chairman is expecting a Ward Cluster Meeting to be held this month. Councillor Russell agreed to chase.

7. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Councillor Webb did not attend the meeting, didn't send his apologies or a report.

8. BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Councillor Russell attended the meeting. She gave an update on the current issues with bin collections.

9. BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

A reminder that this should be considered in all of the items that follow on the agenda.

10. PLANNING

10.1. TO DECLARE ANY LOBBYING OR FORMAL REPRESENTATION

None were declared.

10.2. PLANNING APPLICATIONS RESPONDED TO IN LINE WITH A SCHEME OF DELEGATION.

To confirm the following planning applications were responded to in line with a Scheme of Delegation and the response is included at the end of the minutes of this meeting.

- 24/500784/TPOA - 18 Blunden Lane
- 24/500709/FULL – The Oast Kenward Road
- 24/500853/FULL – Moonrakers

10.3. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Planning responses are recorded at the end of the minutes.

10.4. YALDING ENTERPRISE PARK (YEP)

Nothing further to report. YEP will give an update at the Annual Parish Meeting.

10.5. MAIDSTONE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN

The Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review 2021-2038 was adopted at a Full Council Meeting on 20 March 2024. Objectors have to lodge any Judicial Review within six weeks.

10.6. ANY OTHER PLANNING MATTERS

There were no other planning matters.

11. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Chairman proposed, JB seconded and it was agreed unanimously that the Standing Orders be updated relating to Yalding Parish Council's (YPC) agreement that neither Councillors nor Clerks should meet members of the public alone.

12. FINANCE

12.1. SCHEME OF DELEGATION

- To confirm that bills to the value of £2590.29, that needed to be paid by the end of the financial year, were approved in line with the Scheme of Delegation and are included in the bills list attached to the minutes of this meeting.

The cheques have already been signed and issued however as this is more bills than normal due to the delayed timing of this meeting, The Chairman asked that this confirmation be voted on. DS proposed, SG seconded and it was agreed unanimously.

- To confirm that the carpark management final contract was approved in line with the Scheme of Delegation after general approval at the last meeting.

12.2. MOTION TO PAY BILLS

It was proposed SG, seconded AS and resolved by all to pay bills totalling £10,243.26 exclusive of VAT as per attached list. The Chairman and KG did not vote as they had declared an interest.

12.3. CONFIRM RECEIPTS

A list of receipts (as attached) totalling £333.33 was circulated.

12.4. MONTHLY SPEND AGAINST BUDGET REVIEW

There was no unbudgeted or previously approved spend this month.

12.5. MOTION TO APPROVE J L BUTTIGIEG TREE SERVICES AS GENERAL MAINTENANCE WORK APPROVED CONTRACTOR.

The Motion was proposed JB, seconded DS and resolved unanimously.

12.6. MOTION TO APPROVE RENEWAL OF ZOOM SUBSCRIPTION AT A COST OF £139

The Motion was proposed by The Chairman seconded JC and resolved unanimously.

12.7. MOTION TO APPROVE THE TRANSFER OF PARISH COUNCIL FUNDS TO UNITY TRUST

AS asked that, apart from approvals under The Scheme of Delegation, electronic payments be authorised at a properly convened Council meeting the same way cheques are currently signed.

The Motion was proposed by The Chairman seconded JC and resolved unanimously.

12.8. MOTION TO APPROVE A SIM CARD FOR THE ASSISTANT CLERK

The Motion was proposed by The Chairman seconded AS and resolved unanimously at a cost of £6 per month for use on Council business.

12.9. MOTION TO APPROVE A GRANT OF £150 FROM YALSA TO COVER CESS PIT CHARGES

The Motion was proposed JC seconded AS and resolved unanimously.

12.10. MOTION TO ACCEPT A QUOTE OF UP TO £1115 FOR WORK ON LADDINGFORD VERGES (DETAILS TO BE CIRCULATED)

The Motion was proposed KG seconded DS and resolved unanimously for the clearance and tidying of the verges along the river bank at Laddingford adjacent to the highway.

13. OPEN SPACES

13.1. REPORTS FOLLOWING VISUAL UPDATE INSPECTIONS OF COUNCIL OWNED LAND

13.1.1. THE LEES

Inspection complete, no new issues.

The boot scraper is ready for collection.

13.1.2. THE LEES PICNIC AREA

Inspection complete, no new issues.

13.1.3. YALDING VILLAGE GREEN AND VERGES

Inspection complete, no new issues.

Water continues to run off of the green and freezing on the footway. KG has carried out further investigations and found a tree root in the pipe, therefore a new pipe needs to be fitted. A quote of £3230 has been received and circulated which KG feels is reasonable considering the work required.

KG proposed, SG Seconded and it was agreed unanimously.

13.1.4. JUBILEE FIELD

Inspection complete, no new issues.

13.1.5. LADDINGFORD VERGES

Inspection complete, no new issues.

13.1.6. THE KINTONS

Inspection complete, no new issues.

13.1.7. FOWLE HALL GREEN

Inspection complete, no new issues.

13.1.8. THE TATT

Inspection complete, no new issues

MVCP management plan needs to be updated.

13.2. PLAY AREA INSPECTIONS

13.2.1. JUBILEE FIELD

Inspection complete, no new issues.

13.2.2. THE KINTONS

Inspection complete, no new issues.

13.3. LEES PICNIC AREA

13.3.1. TO DISCUSS THE MANAGEMENT OF THE AREA IN 2024

Josh Buttigieg has signed the contract and started work.

13.4. TO CONFIRM INSPECTION ARRANGEMENT POST-ELECTION

It was confirmed that The Clerk and Assistant Clerk will pick up any areas that are no longer covered after the election until the housekeeping list is reviewed.

13.5. TO ACCEPT THE TREE SAFETY INSPECTION REPORT

The report was accepted KG will complete some of the smaller work and ask J L Buttigieg Tree Services carry out the for the larger work.

13.6. REQUEST TO USE PARISH LAND

The Boathouse are holding a festival on 15 June ending at 10pm and want to offer free parking to eliminate the congestion on Hampstead Lane. They have asked to use the Lees Car Park. Guests will pay the car park entry fee and the Boathouse will refund from their bill. The Boathouse has a key so will lock the car park. It was agreed that this was acceptable.

14. HIGHWAYS

14.1. KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (KCC)

- **REVIEW THE HIGHWAYS LIST** - The list has been updated and circulated. Councillors to advise any additions.
- **DRAINAGE** - Thanks to KG's perseverance significant work has been carried out on Maidstone Road. It is dry currently but it needs to be monitored in the rain. There continues to be ongoing discussions regarding Hampstead Lane and Station Road and a leak at Spinnakers. The Clerk will chase drainage to send the letter to landowners to clear the ditches.
- **WATER ON VICARAGE ROAD** - A meeting of all interested parties has been held. It was confirmed that The Chairman would write to The KCC Cabinet member for transport and drainage to insist this issue is resolved.

Millwood Homes had agreed to look at the water which seemed to have been diverted but to date they haven't reported back.

- **FOOTBRIDGE KM208** - The footbridge on the footpath that runs behind The Chequers towards Gravelly Ways was in a dangerous state of repair, KG did a temporary repair, The Public Rights of Way Office is now dealing with it, details have been circulated.

14.2. OTHER HIGHWAY ISSUES

• POSSIBILITY OF DOUBLE YELLOW LINES OUTSIDE LYNGS FARM HOUSE

The Chairman has spoken to The Highways Engineer who has suggested that it be added to The Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) before The Clerk reports it on the portal, The Chairman is looking at this. Information has just been received from The Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) with regard to HIPs.

- **THE GLEBE** - Countryside Properties have confirmed that they are not considering any additional onsite parking; The Chairman has written to their Managing Director who has responded requesting a plan of any proposals YPC may have. The Clerk is looking for a large-scale plan of the area.
- **SOUTH EAST WATER (SEW)** - Parishes and bus companies have complained of road closures without notice. The KALC CEO met with the Leader of KCC, Roger Gough, and explained the issue faced in Maidstone with emergency road closures from utility companies causing disruptions to diversions due to the lack of inadequate warning. RG advised that KCC had upped their number of inspectors to help the issues. They had also raised emergency works with Minister Guy Upperman.
- **CONSTANT ROAD CLOSURE** – AS suggested that KCC are approving road closures for utility companies when they are not necessary. KCC are aware of the problem, however KCC do not challenge utility companies on safety requirements.

15. FLOODING

15.1. GENERAL UPDATE

YPC and Collier Street Parish Council have asked for replacement road closed signs as many have been damaged especially as Hampstead Lane and Maidstone Road have been regularly closed. This has caused an argument between KCC departments as to whose budget this is coming from. YPC may need to involve the Cabinet Member.

A complete review of flood actions in Yalding and Laddingford to include flood wardens, flood gates and road closures has commenced.

15.2. SUBSTATION UPDATE

The matter is still ongoing.

YPC will write to Golding Homes and MBC. The Chairman will also chase UK Power.

16. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (Nhp)

Derek Hudson is finalising the plan, he has contacted The Clerk and apologised for the delay. He is working to complete before May 25 and hopes to have something for YPC to review soon.

17. EVENTS

17.1. ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

To confirm The Annual Parish Meetings will be held on 14 May 2024 at 7.30pm.

Please ensure that all documentation sent out is read and reviewed and any concerns feedback to The Clerk immediately.

17.2. D-DAY 80 CELEBRATIONS

D- Day 80 celebrations will be on 6TH June 2024. Communities are being asked to ring church bells at 6.30pm and light beacons at 9.15pm. It was agreed that the beacon will be lit on the ground, probably on the war memorial, instead of the church roof. The Chairman and The Clerk will prepare a plan.

18. CONSULTATIONS

No consultations have been received this month.

19. CORRESPONDENCE

19.1. KENT ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (KALC) AND NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCIL (NALC) CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AND CIRCULATED

- NALC Chief Executive's bulletin – 07 March 2024
- NALC Chief Executive's bulletin – 14 March 2024
- NALC Chief Executive's bulletin – 21 March 2024
- NALC Chief Executive's bulletin – 28 March 2024
- NALC Chief Executive's bulletin – 04 April 2024
- KALC Chief Executive's bulletin – 11 April 2024

19.2. OTHER GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AND CIRCULATED

No other general correspondence was received.

19.3. OTHER CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED BEFORE THE MEETING

No further correspondence has been received.

20. OTHER PARISH BUSINESS

20.1. TO AGREE ANY WELCOME LETTERS THAT NEED TO BE SENT

There were none requested.

20.2. CONGELOW ORGANIC EDUCATIONAL CHARITABLE TRUST UPDATE

The Congelow Organic Educational Charitable Trust has offered the use of a piece of land for amenity use in exchange for a peppercorn rent of £1 per year and naming it The Coopers.

We are awaiting a plan of the exact area that The Trust are offering before The Parish Council can apply for change of use. The Clerk suggested that YPC's planning consultant be asked to prepare the planning application as the laws around Change of Use applications are changing.

The Chairman and The Clerk have spoken to the neighbours on Benover Road, there was a mixed response leaning towards negative. It seems there are already problems in the area the police have visited the barn regarding anti-social behaviour, drugs and possibly storage of stolen goods

The sports clubs have had an initial brief and feel that it is better suited to Football, the Football club have some concerns.

20.3. CRICKET CLUB MOBILE CATERING UNIT – REQUEST TO APPLY FOR AN ALCOHOL LICENCE

The Cricket club would like to apply for a licence to sell alcohol in the mobile catering unit, the sale would be to club members during matches and practice sessions only.

It was agreed that this was acceptable based on conditions such as preventing anti-social behaviour and litter. The Chairman will draw this up.

20.4. GARAGE/DRIVE PARKING RENTAL TO THIRD PARTIES

A discussion took place about residents renting driveways for parking. The Chairman felt that some of the green areas in Lyngs Close could be utilised. It was agreed to write to MBC to see if there are any current schemes and also if they would consider turning the small greens into car parking.

20.5. FOOTBALL PITCHES AT JUBILEE FIELD – TO DISCUSS THE PLAN DEVELOPED WITH THE SCHOOL

JB has had a meeting with the school and has issued a written plan for approval which has been circulated. It was agreed in principle. However, JB was requested to send a layout plan of the proposals.

20.6. TO REVIEW THE MONITOR LIST

The monitor list was reviewed and updated.

21. PARISH MATTERS

Request for a path at Laddingford School and Church

A request had been received from the school and responded to by both the Chairman and JB that this should be a request to KCC. The Church has subsequently raised the same issue and will be referred back to the school.

COMMENTS ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

24/500784/TPOA

18 Blunden Lane, Yalding

TPO application to reduce one Sycamore (T1) to 11m in height and a radial spread of 5m.

NO COMMENT

24/500709/FULL

The Oast, Kenward Road

Relocation of principal entrance to east elevation. Modifications to rear patio area including erection of a pergola. Installation of an external staircase and first floor balcony area to north elevation with associated new door to replace window and new section of hipped roof to provide canopy. Replacement doors and windows throughout, including one new bi fold, one new patio door and amended first floor bathroom window to West elevation. Modifications to extend the front driveway area and associated landscaping, boundary fencing and gates.

NO COMMENT

24/500853/FULL

Moonrakers, Darman Lane, Laddingford

Demolition of existing conservatory and erection of two storey side extension and part single part two storey rear extension and widening of existing access.

OBJECT

The current application still substantially increases the size of the property. It would appear as an excessive, overly dominant, incongruous and unsympathetic addition that would be harmful to the character, form and appearance of the host building.

The property lies in a flood zone 3. The flood risk assessment is inadequate. Increasing bedrooms could lead to increasing the occupancy and will expose occupants and members of the emergency services to serious risk in times of flooding. It has not been demonstrated that there is safe access and escape routes, the application also fails to demonstrate that the proposal would not have a detrimental impact in terms of the flood water displacement. The extensions can hardly be described as minor and therefore the proposal does not comply with the requirements of The Environment Agency's standing advice. Therefore, The Environment Agency should be consulted however it is the planning authority's obligation to approve safe access and egress to a flood zone 1 at times of severe flooding.

If the planning officer is of a mind to approve this application before these concerns are satisfactorily addressed, Councillors ask that it be put before MBC planning committee.

24/501028/FULL

Manor Farm, Laddingford

Erection of a general-purpose agricultural storage building for machinery and crops.

NO COMMENT

24/501283/FULL

Upper Fowle Hall Farm, Willow Lane, Paddock Wood

Creation of a new vehicular access with associated hardstanding and erection of timber gates.

NO COMMENT

24/501378/FULL

Orchard View Holiday Park, Shingle Barn Lane

Erection of single storey building to provide reception/site managers office, site storage and maintenance accommodation, ancillary to the permitted caravan and camping use.

OBJECT

The applicant has previously submitted two very similar planning applications 23/501866 and 23/505083 which were refused due to the development representing a significant and unjustified encroachment of built development into the open countryside that would result in harm to the intrinsic character, appearance and openness of the area, with a failure to contribute positively to the conservation and enhancement of that landscape. The current application has some modifications but Councillors consider the above comment is still valid.

The applicant states that the site has been very successful and therefore this development is needed. However, the site is very small relative to many other similar facilities. Councillors feel that the applicant has not proven its usage, Councillors contend that larger camping and caravan facilities do not have or need these facilities, indeed many of them use the internet for booking, payment and notification of arrival times. Councillors feel that insufficient evidence has been provided in order to demonstrate there is a need for this building that would override the harm caused.

Should the planning officer be of a mind to approve this application Councillors ask that it be referred to the planning committee.

24/501358/FULL

Larkspur Cottage, Wagon Lane

Demolition of garage and erection of a timber prefabricated single storey granny annexe for ancillary use to the main dwelling.

NO COMMENT

However, Councillors ask there is a condition legally tying the annexe to the main dwelling.

MBC PLANNING DECISIONS SINCE LAST MEETING

24/500223/FULL

Cherry Tree Barn, Lees Road

Section 73 - Application for Minor Material Amendment to approved plans condition 2 and Variation of Condition 3 (revise the elevations showing the new pitch roof, tiles to match existing on the house) pursuant to

23/502342/FULL for Erection of a detached timber framed double garage.

GRANTED

24/500140/LAWPRO

1 Oast Court, Yalding

Lawful Development Certificate for the proposed installation of on roof solar panels.

GRANTED

23/505677/FULL

The Elms High Street

Demolition of existing double garage/workshop, piggery, triple garage and field shelter and erection of a single storey garage block and stables.

GRANTED

There being no further business the meeting closed at 22:39

Signed.....

Date.....