

APPLEDORE PARISH COUNCIL



2nd September 2024 Draft Minutes of the Meeting 19:30 Appledore Village Hall (SMV2)

Present at the meeting: Cllr Roger Hiskey (Chairman), Cllr Kevin Nicol (Vice Chairman), Cllr Paula Thornton, Cllr Roger Kimber, Cllr Sharon Marsh, Steve McIntyre (Clerk).

10 members of the public in attendance.

Formalities

i) Establish Quorum (LGA Act 1972 sch12, 12/28/45)

The council was quorate.

ii) Apologies and Reasons for Absence (LGA Act 1972 sch12, 12)

Cllr Gary Kinsley - personal commitment, Cllr Chester Lusk - work commitment, County Cllr Mike Hill - priority commitment, Borough Cllr Johnny Shilton - priority commitment.

iii (a) Declarations of Interest (Code of Conduct)

Cllr Kimber declared an interest concerning planning application OTH/2024/1320 as per Agenda Item 4.2. Cllr Kimber lives close to the property to which the application relates.

Cllr Thornton declared an interest regarding Agenda Item 6 in that a family member may be interested in renting the council owned house at 5 Sandpiper Close.

iii (b) Requests for Dispensations

None requested.

2. Recognition of the work of Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) Aniko Szocs, and announcement of new RFO

Cllr Nicol thanked Aniko for her invaluable efforts in compiling of the Appledore Parish Councils (APC) Year End 23/24 financial records, integral to the successful of the internal and external audit outcomes. Also, an appreciation for the time taken to develop Steve McIntyre (Clerk) to enable him to take over the RFO role. Cllr Hiskey reinforced the Councils appreciation. Steve McIntyre presented Aniko with a gift on behalf of APC.

Cllr Hiskey informed that Steve McIntyre has been appointed as APC's RFO.

3. Approval of Draft Minutes

To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 5th August 2024 (already circulated to councillors) as a true record (Available on <http://www.appledorekent.gov>).

(LGA Act 1972 sch12,19.1)

August 2024 APC minutes unanimously agreed.

At this point the meeting will be adjourned for the public session

County and District Councillors Reports

Public Session

This session will last for 15 minutes. Members of the public will have 3 minutes to ask one question or make a statement on an item on the agenda except for the minutes. Should you wish to address other issues please contact the clerk or chairman afterwards. The public are welcome to stay and observe the rest of the meeting but are reminded that they cannot take part.

Cllr Hiskey confirmed that the South East Water road closure issue will be raised at Item 19 later in the agenda. He also informed that Item 18 (ii) Cycle / Pathway Appledore to Appledore Station will be discussed after Item 5.5.

Simon Honnor (member of the public) referred to Item 18 (iii) Management of the Horse Chestnut Tree, informing councillors that he has spoken to his neighbours at 74 the street and has spoken with Ashford Borough Council (ABC) regarding the conservation requirements, concluding there is no need for funding from APC.

Simon Honnor also referred to Item 19.1 explaining that new/replacement posts are required to other verge locations along The Street, as well as to Church grass areas, to prevent vehicles being driven and parked on areas where they should not. Cllr Hiskey said he would add "other areas requiring posts" to Item 19.1.

Another member of the public raised the issue that yellow fire hydrant signs have been moved from the ground at the vicinity of the Martello development site. **Action: Cllr Hiskey said he would speak with the Development Supervisor.**

Meeting reconvened at 19:41hrs

4. Planning

(Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and as amended)

4.1 Planning decisions by Ashford Borough Council

(i) PA/2024/1318 Griffin Villa, Woodchurch Rd, Appledore, Kent TN26 2BB, Proposal to build a single storey extension, considered lawful

No comment.

4.2 Planning applications to consider

OTH/2024/1320, Land To North Of 5 Maple Place, Court Lodge Road, Appledore, TN26 2BZ
Proposal

T6 Holly - Crown lift to 4m over driveway with 0.5m back from the boundary line.

T10 Birch - dead, fell

T16 Birch - dead, fell

T18 Birch - almost dead - fell both stems

T19 Birch - prune back to give 2m clearance from the structure

T28 Plum - prune back to 0.5m within boundary

Cllr Kimber explained this is a revised submission which now accurately describes the trees proposed to be felled or pruned and that the ABC Tree Officer is content with the application.

Cllr Marsh proposed to support the amended application without further comment required from APC, seconded by Cllr Nicol, unanimously agreed.

4.3 Ashford Borough Council, planning presentation update (RH)

Cllr Hiskey updated on the planning guidance presentation for councillors led by Simon Cole, Director of Planning, ABC, on the 22nd July 2024. Cllr Hiskey précised the following key areas: how are decisions made? how can we influence decisions? key issues? how to practically assist? preparation of new Local Plan, and Stodmarsh-“up to speed”.

5. Finances (SMc)

5.1 Balances

Current A/C opening balance 01/07/2024 £29,554.99, closing balance 31/07/2024 £22,965.41

Reserve A/C opening balance 01/07/2024 £52,682.57, closing balance 31/07/2024 £52,751.63

5.2 Deposits and payments

Current A/C income £112 Natwest compensation. Payments - £6,701.58

Reserve A/C income £69.06 interest. Payments – Nil

Remaining funds for current funded projects as of 2nd September 2024

| Funds paid to APC | Balance |
|--|--------------------------|
| Martello Cash £60,000 fund for Pavilion Upgrade: | £5,490.31 |
| Railway Hotel 106 £11,540.39 capital fund for MUGA/Tennis: | £7,052.39 |
| Railway Hotel 106 £2,354.29 maintenance fund MUGA/Tennis: | £2,345.29 |
| Railway Hotel 106 £4,710.99 capital fund for Play Park: | £4,710.99 |
| Railway Hotel 106 £1,880.6 capital fund for Allotments: | £0,000.00 |
| Total fund balance: | <u>£19,598.98</u> |

5.3 VAT update

Steve McIntyre informed that Steve Parkinson of The Parkinson Partnership LLP (KALC external adviser) advised that if Appledore Parish Council (i) receive section 106 funds and grants, (ii) order, supervise and pay for the work, (iii) before gifting it to charity, (iv) without receiving anything in return, they should be able to reclaim the VAT as non-business (as per S10.4 of VAT Notice 749). Steve McIntyre explained the rationale as to why it's believed APC meets the criteria and therefore can claim the VAT for the recreation ground related projects e.g. The pavilion, Sports MUGA & Tennis, Play Area. **Action: based on no responses to the contrary Steve McIntyre to go ahead and claim the related VAT.**

5.4 Precept 2025/2026 update from William MacKay Acct, ABC; the tax base will be agreed at the Cabinet meeting of 14 November 2024 and then circulated. Parishes confirm the 2025/26 precept requirements by 17 January 2025

Steve McIntyre asked Councillors to consider future funding requirements in advance of calculating the 25/26 precept.

5.5 NatWest A/C update & Mazars External Audit findings

Steve McIntyre reported that the external audit concluded with no significant matters arising. The auditor identified a minor clerical error which was rectified. Mazar advised that all Parish Councils should use gov.uk domains and email addresses which, in the case of emails, if not carried out by 31/03/25 could result in a qualification or other matter on the 2024/2025 AGAR.

Action: Steve McIntyre to discuss gov.uk options with Cllr Kinsley.

18 (ii) Cycle path between Appledore and Station (SM), (Agenda Item brought forward to allow reasonable discussion time).

Cllr Marsh and Jane Garner (project associate) reported they have engaged with the majority of the relevant land owner stakeholders, all who are supportive for the path upgrade initiative for pedestrian and cycle use. The path will need to be hard surfaced to avoid boggy terrain during the winter months. A work-around is required to reposition and extend the path across the field nearest to the station thus avoiding the current need to walk / cycle on a dangerous section of the B2080. The landowner for this field is supportive of the pathway repositioning / extension on the basis that it forms part of any new housing development. After taking advice from an Open Space specialist, and following agreement with the field owner, Cllr Marsh recommended that APC make a "Call for Sites" submission for this field to ABC as part of the new Local Plan 2041 consultation. Cllr Hiskey proposed the submission, seconded by Cllr Nicol, unanimously agreed.

6. Number 5 Sandpiper Close update, and review of decision 7th Aug 2024 to appoint Agent

Steve McIntyre advised Councillors to suspend the decision made last month to hire Phillips and Stubbs as the agent for 5 Sandpiper Close. Rationale: since the last meeting correspondence received from ABC Lettings, a non-profit making organisation offering a competitive rental Agent service on behalf of ABC Housing. Suspension of the decision will provide councillors the chance to consider the wider options, not previously on offer, which together with information gathering from a meeting with ABC Housing due on the 4th September 2024 will help inform the right decision for the Parish. Cllr Hiskey proposed suspension of the previous decision to appoint an Agent, to allow time to consider the wider options, seconded by Cllr Nicol, unanimously agreed.

7. Linear Park (GK) – Cllr Kinsley to update at next meeting.

8. Heathside update book exchange and defib (KN) – Cllr Nicol informed that still awaiting a decision to divert electricity connection to Heathside.

9. Web domain update (GK), retaining domain names & Wix (SMc) – Steve McIntyre reported that Namesco are requesting payment to renew 2 x domains believed not to be in use. They are Appledorekent.co.uk and Appledorekent.uk. **Action: Cllr Kinsley to advise on the way forward.**

10. Police liaison update (KN) – Cllr Nicol waiting for PC Laker to confirm dates for attendance at future APC meeting.

11. Highways Improvement Plan update (RK) – Cllr Kimber reported that the new HIP group met for the first time on 29th August 2024. They agreed the requirements for positioning of 2 x children warning signs and road markings at Hawthorn and Martello Development locations for attention of motorists approaching and passing the recreation ground. Cllr Kimber sought a proposal, in principle, for the installation of the 2 posts subject to clarification of queries since raised with highways around their suggested positioning of one of the posts on the offside opposite the Old Surgery. Cllr Hiskey proposed, seconded by Cllr Nicol, unanimously agreed. Cllr Hiskey reported other initiatives being reviewed including scoping feasibility of SID 30mph flashing lights to slow traffic on The Street, traffic calming initiatives at "The Narrows" and Kenardington Road in the vicinity of Hornes Place Oast. The HIP group have a meeting with highways on 4th October 2024. Cllr Hiskey thanked Cllr Kimber and the group for their constructive ideas.

12. Court Lodge Car Park; sign repositioning and removal of tree updates (RK)

Repositioning of sign now complete. Birds currently nesting in tree, new date to be set to take down tree.

13. Policy review update (PT, SM)

Cllrs Thornton and Marsh reported that they'd reviewed and were content with the following existing policies: Health and Safety Policy Statement, the Grievance Policy and Procedure, the

Disciplinary Policy and Procedure, and the Equal Opportunity Policy. They have reviewed and amended the Clerks Expenses Policy and the Sickness Policy, both sent prior to this meeting to Councillors. Cllr Thornton proposed sign off for all above mentioned policies, seconded by Cllr Marsh, unanimously agreed.

14 Green initiatives

(i) EV update (RK) – Regarding grants for electric vehicle points at Court Lodge Car Park, Cllr Kimber reported seeking advice from Ben Bolton (KCC) who referred to a new Local Electrical Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Scheme that is not yet up and running. This scheme will aim to install up to 10,000 charging points across the country. Cllr Kimber also identified the Community Capital Grant Scheme as an option which, if can be applied for, will need to be submitted by the end of the month. Failing this we will need to consider taking out the electric meter to save costs.

(ii) FIT payments - Steve McIntyre reported issues with getting written confirmation from EDF regarding transferring ownership, together with existing contract, from APC to the Village Hall Charity. Action: Steve McIntyre to speak with and write to EDF.

15. Recreation ground update (GK) – Cllr Hiskey read out a pre prepared update from Cllr Kinsley on recreation ground upgrade work. **Pavilion renovations completed:** underpinning, disabled access, fit of new windows & cladding, new electrics / lights and wifi booster. **Pavilion work outstanding:** new doors, reposition of radiators, extend patio, upgrade worn part of the roof, paint and decorate interior, add security cameras. **Recreation Ground (inc MUGA/Tennis upgrades completed:** container moved and now with electricity supply, French drain for MUGA and Tennis courts now completed. **Recreation ground upgrades outstanding:** to move nets and create a “D” for basketball hoop, clean, re-mark and add steps to MUGA and Tennis Courts. Playground work to start shortly. The renovation work is receiving positive feedback and Cllr Kinsley hopes to provide a further positive update at the next meeting.

16. Community Resilience update (PT) – Cllr Thornton reported she’d spoken with SE Water and with ABC Resilience Department regarding the recent water shortage. The resilience department were unaware of the issue. When asked what are they doing about vulnerable people SE Water replied “they didn’t know.” Emma Harris of SE Water said she would take forward the concerns raised by Cllr Thornton. Cllr Hiskey expressed his thanks to Cllr Thornton for taking forward these points.

17. Unauthorised fly posting (KN) – Cllr Nicol questioned current levels of fly posting in Appledore and asked if APC would want to seek a by-law against this activity. Cllr Hiskey explained that he didn’t have a problem with this form of advertising and would rather not pursue a by-law. No further comment from councillors.

18. Other matters

(i) Station antiques: update from APCOA / GOVIA (SMc)

Steve McIntyre reported an update from Highways who confirmed that all the time the advertising cart is on private land and does not interfere with the line of view for motorists on the B2080 (which in their view it does not) then this is not a Highways matter. Steve McIntyre to contact APCOA and GOVIA for an update.

(ii) Cycle path between Appledore and Station (SM)

This item repositioned between Items 5.5 and 6 – see above.

(iii) Horse Chestnut tree update (74 The Street)

Steve McIntyre updated that he’d advised the occupants of 74 The Street that the tree in question did not meet the criteria for APC intervention, and that their neighbour Simon Honnor said he would be in touch to discuss a joint approach to any tree management required.

19. Correspondence (SMc)

(i) Garry Morgan request to replace / add posts on grass verges outside Church – Steve McIntyre to establish from Simon Honnor what other areas in the street require new / replacement posts and then submit 1 request (to include Church) to John Wickens for costing.

(ii) Planning presentation update – see Item 4.3 above.

(iii) ABC update for Heathside 106 play park transfer of funding – ABC 106 team confirmed with Steve McIntyre that ABC legal are reviewing this funding.

Other correspondence

- A reminder of the request from Brian and Tessa Knight for urgently needed volunteers / support to assist with the Parish Magazine – meeting 19th September 2024.
- Phillipa Perkins request for funding towards the over 65 Christmas party – **Action: Steve McIntyre to speak with Phillipa regarding funding outcomes.**
- Air ambulance request for funding- **Action: Steve McIntyre to place on next Agenda.**
- Mary Philo request for APC to collect all previous parish records from her home. Derek Winter and the Village Hall trustees have agreed that APC can temporarily store their records in the Village Hall. APC Councillors agreed to assist with document sifting that will include storing docs over 30 yrs old to Kent Archive. **Action: Steve McIntyre to collect records and coordinate a paper sift exercise.**
- Steve McIntyre has written to SE Water requesting confirmation of their comms strategy regarding recent road closure.

20. Future agenda items – Village Hall car park repairs required, working party for car parks clean up, Air Ambulance donation request.

21. Date of next meeting - Monday 7th October 2024, 7.30pm, Appledore Village Hall

22. Staff personnel matters

Pursuant to section 1) of the Public Bodies (Admissions Act) 1960, to agree that, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press leave the meeting during the item regarding Staffing Issues. LGA sch. 12A part 1.3 (Personnel)

21:10 hours – commenced confidential meeting, without members of the public present, for APC Personnel Committee to discuss staff contracts with all councillors – written account stored separately. 21:30 meeting concluded.