

APPLEDORE PARISH COUNCIL



3rd June 2024 Draft Minutes of the Meeting 19:30 Appledore Village Hall

Present at the meeting: Cllr Roger Hiskey (Chair), Cllr Gary Kinsley, Cllr Paula Thornton, Cllr Kevin Nicol, Cllr Roger Kimber, Cllr Sharon Marsh, Steve McIntyre (Clerk), Aniko Szocs (RFO) County Councillor Mike Hill.

10 members of the public in attendance.

1. 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 Chester Lusk & Borough Cllr Johnny Shilton – need to attend to prioritised demands.

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

Ref 11.1, Cllr Kimber part owns the land on which Highways plan to erect a new road sign.

Ref 4.4, Cllr Marsh lives next door to the Methodist Church (PA/2024/0971).

iii (b) Requests for dispensations

None requested.

2. Approval of Draft Minutes

To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 13th May 2024, (already circulated to councillors) as a true recorded (Available on <http://www.appledorekent.co.uk>).

Cllr Thornton proposed approval of 13th May minutes, seconded by Cllr Marsh, unanimous.

At this point the meeting will be adjourned for the public session (LGA Act 1972 sch12,19.1)

County and District Councillors Reports

Mike reported the general election has stopped a lot of activity and that councillors now awaiting the election outcome to see how it affects County Council business. There's not a lot of money being offered and its expected there will probably not be much change. The main concern is the situation at Dover with the traffic holdups caused by border checks. This situation may worsen as of October with the introduction of a new border system with a worry that traffic queues will extend to Ashford's local road network. The Resilience Forum

Lead has been asked to explain to Tenterden what is happening. Cllr Kimber asked if once biometric checks had been requested, would this ease the process for subsequent travel? Mike did not know but added he believes coach transport to be the most difficult to check and clear.

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.

Residents raised concerns in respect of the planning application PA/2024/0971 for variations to condition 2 – see 4.2 (i) below. The explained the following:

- The application includes the request to change windows that overlook No 54 the street, and other premises. One of the windows apparently looks directly into a neighbours bathroom.
- The drawings are believed inaccurate e.g. only 1 Velux window required but planning documents show 2. The clear glass windows requested, as part of this variation application, are believed to already be in place.
- Based on the observations above it feels like this is a retrospective planning application.
- Some neighbours are believed to have already made representations to Ashford Borough Council.

Cllr Hiskey invited Robin Buckle to brief Cllrs and members of the public on his ideas for road improvements and tree planting initiatives. Robin raised his concerns in relation to the road layout at The Narrows and the risks this brings to pedestrians e.g. when vehicles mount the pavement to allow traffic contraflow via such a limited space. This location needs signs to let drivers know it is a shared space for whom pedestrians have priority. Other members of the public expressed their concern with excessive vehicle speed on The Street from Heathside to The Narrows. The general view was that it is a matter of time before someone gets injured or worse.

Robin Buckle said the Court Lodge Car Park is a bit urban and that this could be overcome by planting trees (e.g. Silver Birch) within the bed located in the middle of the car park. Robin believes the Recreation Grounds current undefined look could be overcome by planting trees either side of the road which would give a “boulevard effect.” This could be replicated on the lane next to the Recreation Ground that leads to the field.

Another member of the public raised that they had not received an answer to a complaint about oversized fencing. S McIntyre (Clerk) apologised and asked them to resend the query.

Cllr Hiskey thanked everyone for their contributions and explained that councillors will discuss the planning issue raised (see 4.2 (i) below), The Narrows, road layout / vehicle speed issues and tree planting initiatives when the meeting reconvenes.

The meeting reconvened at 20:02 hours

3. To elect a councillor, not already on the Recreation Ground Committee, as a member of the Recreation Ground Improvements Advisory Group (RGIAG)

Cllr Hiskey confirmed that Cllr Lusk has agreed to represent APC on the RGIAG. Cllr Hiskey proposed Cllr Lusk for the role, seconded by Cllr March, unanimous.

4. Planning (Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and as amended)

4.1 Planning decisions by Ashford Borough Council

Nothing of relevance

4.2 Planning applications to consider

i) PA/2024/0971 Appledore Methodist Church –variation to condition 2 of PA/2023/1461: amendment to 2 windows & addition of roof light to allow ventilation and additional escape routes. 27/06/2024 deadline for comments

Cllrs discussed and agreed that Appledore Parish Council (APC) respond to Ashford Borough Council (ABC) commenting they do not support the variations at this time. The reasons will include:

1) the original planning condition to which this variation application applies does not appear to have been complied with e.g. it's believed the clear windows to which this variation request relates, have already been installed.

2) Residents have expressed concern that the clear windows cause privacy issues for neighbours.

APC requests information of what work has been completed prior to the variation application to establish whether a planning breach has occurred.

5. Finances

5.1 Balances

30th April 2024

Current a/c bank rec. closing balance £31,275.10 (includes precept of £6,591.59 Railway 106 capital spend and £14,250 Precept). Business Reserve a/c £82,391.81 (includes £62,343.01 capital spend).

May 24 statement not yet received.

5.2 Deposits and Payments

May statement not yet received for deposits.

Items for payment June 2024

Method	Cheque No.	Items for Approval for Payment	Description	VAT	Total payable
Cheque	2017	HMRC	Employer Contribution	£ -	£ 212.40
Cheque	2010	TP Jones	Payroll Processing Company	£ 10.73	£ 128.80
Cheque	2006	Milo Kendell	Electricity work to fix toilet		£ 102.50
Cheque	2016	Clerk-Expense	Admin	£ 5.59	£ 40.30
Cheque	2012, 13, 14 & 15	Salaries	Employee Salaries		£ 1,394.26
Cheque	2011	EON	Electricity bill		£ 64.05
Cheque		ABC	Lawful Development Certificate application		£ 214.50
				£ 16.32	£ -
Comments:			SUBTOTAL		£ 2,156.81
			TOTAL		£ 2,156.81

5.3 Agreement of the Annual Return 2023 – 2024

i) Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023 – 2024

ii) Section 2 – Account Statements 2023 – 2024, to confirm Annual Account Statement

iii) Internal Audit – to review and acknowledge internal auditor’s comments

Aniko Szocs RFO confirmed that the internal auditor has approved the APC accounts FYE 31st March 24. Aniko provided a precis of the auditor’s report. All Cllrs acknowledged the review and findings. Cllr Hiskey read out paragraphs 1 – 8, and the bank reconciliation information, contained within the Governance and Annual Account Statements. All councillors acknowledged. Aniko Szocs explained that a Notice will be advertised on 3rd June 2024 advising members of the public of the process to inspect the records prior to sending them to the external auditor.

6. Management of Council Owned House – update on enquiries with Martello and potential rental Agents clarifying theirs and PCs responsibilities (GK / SM)

Cllr Hiskey updated all on an APC meeting with Martello Developments (MD) representatives earlier today which included a visit of the council house in newly named Sandpiper Close. It was confirmed the purchase of the house includes fitting of white goods and flooring. Fibre broadband will be connected. Completion expected to be February 2025. Engagement with potential rental agents is ongoing.

7. Martello funding (All) (see also item 13)

S McIntyre (Clerk) requested a decision on the following: confirmation that the £60,000 cash funding from Martello Developments, referred in previous minutes as Recreation Ground Pavilion Refurbishment funding, still stands. Cllr Kinsley proposed the spend for the refurbishment, seconded by Cllr Marsh, unanimous decision.

S McIntyre requested a decision on choice of contractor and costs for the Pavilion Refurbishment project. Cllr Kinsley proposed the following, (seconded by Cllr March and unanimously agreed):

JK Builders (preferred bidder) £48,490 exc vat, for underpin of concrete slab, cladding to external walls, new fascia & gutter / tin roof and security fence. MGK Electrical Services (preferred bidder), £2101 (no vat) for electrical work. Glass Warehouse (preferred bidder), £3886.54 exc VAT, for new doors and windows. Guidance is being sought as to whether APC can claim the VAT. This proposal and agreement from councillors are on the basis that the new tin roof will not be purchased until confirmation received that VAT is claimable.

Additional Railway Hotel funding / spend proposals (links to agenda item 16 below)

Cllr Kinsley proposed Railway Hotel 106 fund capital spend and choice of contractor to progress the Outdoor Sport Pitches project. The project capital funding of £11,540 is ready for APC and ABC to sign off subject to an additional quote required for a minimum of £108.6. The preferred bidder; JK Builders, £9,330 exc vat, for the following work: basket ball D, picnic table base, tennis court steps, french drain. This proposal seconded by Cllr Marsh, unanimously agreed.

Cllr Kinsley proposed Railway 106 funding spend and choice of contractor to progress the Young Peoples Play Area project. The project capital funding of £4710 has been officially agreed between ABC and APC. The preferred bidder is Playdale Playgrounds who estimated the total project cost at £15,944 but this will be revised to purchase playground toys up to the value of £4710. Cllr Marsh seconded, unanimously supported.

8. Car parks, clean up requirements (RH)

Cllr Hiskey explained the need to maintain the APC car parks. Cllr Kimber mentioned using contractors. It was decided this option would cost too much. It was decided to invite residents to assist with clean up. Cllrs Kinsley, Thornton and Hiskey agreed to help. Cllrs Marsh and Kimber to liaise and propose dates for clean ups.

9. Heathside update (KN)

i) Book exchange and defib

Cllr Nicol reported that a meeting with Jenner(developer) and ABC Housing representatives was positive. Cllr Nicol's suggestion of the developer providing and installing a defib machine was received positively. Also, the option of building a 3ft cupboard next to the seating area was considered as possible. This would offer the possibility of a "book exchange." These options remove the need for Lawful Development Certificate planning application. Cllr Hiskey expressed his appreciation and congratulations to Cllr Nicol for what he has achieved.

ii) 22/00567/AS - felling of trees and removal of hedging

Cllr Nicol has received an explanation from the developer concerning clearing of trees / hedging being that they were only trimmed hence why they did not require regulatory permission. In respect of any protected species, they do not acknowledge their existence within this specific area.

10. Web domain update (GK)

No update, still awaiting pricing.

11. HIP (RK)

i) Court Lodge car park sign, replacement gate sign, traffic calming update (RK)

ii) Discuss a resident's suggestions for Highway improvements and tree planting

Cllr Kimber reported that Highways have not yet installed the car park sign, have not yet lowered the sign that abuts the property of 2A the street, have not yet provided replaced the gate, and not provided traffic calming kit.

Cllr Kimber has produced evidence of his shared ownership of land on which the proposed new sign and post will be installed. He has sent the proof to Highways and awaits their response.

Cllrs discussed the issue of the Street and The Narrows traffic speeding and the options available to improve traffic management and pedestrian safety. S McIntyre (Clerk) to add the issue to the Highways Improvement Plan as the start of a conversation with Highways. This to include the issue of the proximity of the junctions.

All Cllrs discussed the tree options proposed by Robin Buckle. Cllr Hiskey said that Linear Park should include trees both sides of the road that in vicinity of the recreation ground. Cllr Kinsley explained that the initial Linear Park proposal was for wild plants / flowers, although there were concerns of plants overgrowing onto the street and the difficulty of managing this. Cllr Kinsley supported Robin's idea. Cllr Hiskey said that Martello has doubts that trees should be both sides of the road. Actions: S McIntyre to consult with Martello regarding Linear Park tree planting on both sides of the road. Also, to research tree grants.

12. EV update (includes electricity standing charge issue) (RK)

Cllr Kimber reported that still awaiting the 3rd quote for provision and installation of Electric Vehicle charging points. Prices quoted so far: anything between £3600 and £5600 exc vat. He informed that ABC are anticipating a new round of grants for EV points in the future. In the meantime, we need to submit a Lawful Development application as advised by ABC Planning at a cost of £214. Cllr Kimber proposed the application process and spend of £214, seconded by Cllr Marsh, unanimous.

13. Recreation ground update (GK) (See also 7. Above)

Cllr Kinsley reported that work commenced on Pavilion refurbishment. The subsidence has been shored up. The new front entrance is wheel chair accessible.

14. Public toilets (RH)

Cllr Hiskey reported on the rationale for the current public toilet closure and that we are expecting an engineer to fix the automatic lock issue on the 20th June 2024.

15. Agree policies to be reviewed for June 2024

Cllr Hiskey agreed to review the Financial Policies.
Cllrs Marsh and Thornton agreed to review the HR related policies.

S McIntyre to send the policy documents to Cllrs.

16. Other matters

Station antiques: update from APCOA / GOVIA (SM)

S McIntyre has sent a chaser email to APCOA. Agreed that if no response in 2 weeks then report to Highways.

2A The Street border fence update (RK)

Cllr Kimber has had 3 quotes (£748 Wickens, £1108 Underdown, £1108 total fences) for replacing fence panels to rear of 2A the street. The owner of the premises has agreed to contribute £300. Cllr Kimber proposed £748 Wickens quote with APC contribution £448. Seconded by Cllr Thornton, unanimous.

Additional tree issue

Cllr Kimber reported a dead tree in Court Lodge Road and confirmed the tree is the responsibility of APC. A resident has complained about the tree. Cllr Kimber proposed the

tree is removed and has obtained 3 quotes ranging from £175 to £350 of which he recommends the quote at £175 + vat. Cllr Hiskey seconded, unanimous.

Railway Hotel 106 funding (Green Space / Play Area / Tennis & MUGA / Allotments) (SM)

See agenda item 7 "Additional Funding".

Martello request to agree change of sewerage connection point (GK)

Martello now dealing directly with ABC.

Church bench replacement (RK)

Cllr Hiskey reported that the bench appears salvageable and that its probably just the top of the bench that needs re fitting. Cllr Hiskey to approach Colin Hobdell to see if he is willing to undertake repair of the bench.

17. Correspondence (SM)

None

18. Future agenda items

Cycle path between Appledore and the Appledore Station.

19. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 1st July 2024, 7.30pm, Appledore Village Hall.