

APPLEDORE PARISH COUNCIL



4th November 2024 Draft Minutes of the Meeting 19:30 Appledore Village Hall (APC) (SMV3)

Present at the meeting: Cllr Roger Hiskey (Chairman), Cllr Kevin Nicol, Cllr Paula Thornton, Cllr Chester Lusk, Cllr Gary Kinsley, Cllr Sharon Marsh, Steve McIntyre (Clerk).

5 members of the public in attendance.

County Cllr Mike Hill, Kent County Council (KCC) and Borough Cllr Johnny Shilton, Ashford Borough Council (ABC) in attendance for Items 1 & 2.

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 Roger Kimber – personal commitment.

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

Cllr Pauline Thornton declared an interest concerning Item 6 (5, Sandpiper Close) due to family interest in renting the Parish House. Also, Item 17 correspondence concerning Old Way Lane flooding reported to KCC by Councillor Thornton's husband.

iii (b) Requests for Dispensations

None requested.

2. Approval of Draft Minutes

To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 7th October 2024 (already circulated to councillors) as a true record (Available on <http://www.appledorekent.gov>).

(LGA Act 1972 sch12,19.1)

The surname "Vane" changed to "Self" in 1st paragraph of page 7. Otherwise, minutes proposed as accurate by Cllr Kinsley, seconded by Cllr Thornton, unanimously agreed.

County Councillor Reports

County Cllr Hill reported that KCC are analysing the impact of the latest government budget. There is no mention in the budget for tackling social care although KCC has ring fenced some funds for social care and for repairing pot holes. This will allow a temporary fix but not solve the problems over the longer term. All departments are subject to a 2% fund reduction.

Borough Cllr Shilton expressed his continued concern at the lack of response to mould and vermin issues in some ABC houses. The Administration and some Members of Parliament are trying to resolve the issue. Borough Cllr Shilton asked to let him know of anyone who is suffering with this issue.

Borough Cllr Shilton reminded all that this is the period when grants are available if they need any support with projects. County Cllr Hill echoed the offer.

In response to questions from councillors and members of the public, County Cllr Hill explained the current high level of road closures in the County are mainly due to works undertaken by Utility Companies. Borough Cllr Shilton explained there are apparently no legal time limits for Enforcement Teams to remove the Hornes Place Oast fence, and that he has requested weekly progress updates from ABC. Regarding the chances of the Eurostar service re opening at Ashford Station, County Cllr Hill explained that Eurostar's preference continues to be running trains direct from London to France.

Cllr Thornton raised the difficulty of getting a response from KCC in relation to flooding at Old Way Lane. County Cllr Hill said he will take this issue up with the relevant department. **Cllr Thornton to send details to County Cllr Hill.**

Public Session commenced 19:45

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.

Member of the public reported overgrown hedges at Bennetts (56) and 56A The Street. Cllr Thornton referred to signs in Court Lodge Road obscured by hedges. **S McIntyre to make enquiries.**

The meeting to reconvene 19:47

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

3.1 Planning application and appeal decisions for information

AP-90645 (PA/2023/1476): Hornes Place Oast, Appledore TN262BS; retrospective alterations to consented fence. Decision: Appeal dismissed.

Commented upon during the public session – see above. No further comment.

PA/2024/1050 Ancillary Building South of Lanes End Cottage, Tenterden Road, Appledore, TN26 2AL; Change of use, conversion, and alterations to existing ancillary outbuilding to provide a standalone dwellinghouse with residential garden area. Decision: Approve with conditions.

No comment.

3.2 Planning applications for consideration

PA/2024/1893, Brick On Edge Cottage, Station Road, Appledore, Ashford, Kent TN26 2DE; Proposed single storey rear extension, alterations to existing lean to roof, changes to external material and fenestration. Consultation end date 20th Nov 2024.

Cllr Marsh proposed “no objection,” seconded by Cllr Hiskey, unanimously agreed.

3.3 Other planning matters

Reference PA/2023/1461, Appledore Parish Council have received 2 complaints in relation to the renovation of the Methodist Church, specifically the painting of the front of the building and the belief that this is in contravention of condition 6. Ashford Borough Council has confirmed this matter is under investigation.

S McIntyre explained that ABC have confirmed they are investigating the matter. **S McIntyre to get ABC update.**

4. Finances (SMc)

4.1 Balances

Current a/c (01/09/24 to 30/09/24) opening balance £49,631.63, closing balance £48,650.80
Reserve a/c (01/09/24 to 30/09/24) opening balance £22,800.79, closing balance £22,828.87

4.2 Deposits and payments

Current a/c (01/09/24 to 30/09/24) deposits total £14,250, payments total £15,230.83
Reserve a/c (01/09/24 to 30/09/24) deposits total £28.08, payments total £0.00

4.3 Martello / Railway Hotel 106 funding update

S McIntyre reported that Martello paid APC £16,000 in October 24 for the Recreation Ground Sports MUGA upgrade. This payment was agreed via email correspondence dated 11/05/22 from Heidi Hampson of Martello to APC, the relevant extract as follows:

“We would like to provide the £16k MUGA in cash to the APC opposed to carrying out the work ourselves. We would provide the hardcore base under the swings as agreed up to the cost of £2k towards the park.”

Cllr Kinsley confirmed the hardcore base, up to the value of £2,000, as referred in the Martello email extract, has been installed by Martello.

Regarding the Railway Hotel 106 Allotment maintenance funding of £481.09, Duncan Gray (on behalf of the Appledore Allotments Charity) has offered to contact ABC 106 team to confirm requirements to access the funds.

4.4 Precept 2025/2026

Budget 2024/2025 analyses of first 6 months expenditure and projected Financial Year End spend

Precept 2024/2025 - £28,500

01/04/24 to 30/09/24 expenditure total £12,072.19
01/10/24 to 31/03/25 anticipated expenditure £16,447.81

Total 24/25 anticipated expenditure £28,447.32 (under spend of £52.68)

Projected 2025/2026 Precept

Proposed 25/26 budget allocation totals £28,960 with a recommendation to apply for the same precept as last year; £28,500.

S McIntyre explained the main projected budget variations which overall do not materially affect the total projected budget for 25/26. These include additional costs for car park maintenance (subject to councillors decision whether to contract out) and, in contrast, less costs due to reduced staffing levels.

Cllr Nicol proposed an “in principle” agreement of the proposed 2025/2026 precept subject to clarification of increased costs such as insurance for 5 Sandpiper Close. Cllr Thornton seconded, agreed unanimously.

4.5 On-line banking update

S McIntyre explained that mandate, reference 1568, to add S McIntyre as a signatory, has been signed off by Cllrs Hiskey and Kinsley and is now awaiting Natwest sign off. Once agreed by Natwest, S McIntyre to sign mandate reference 7114 to apply for on-line banking for Cllr Hiskey, Cllr Kinsley and S McIntyre.

5. Appledore to Appledore Station path/cycle route update (SM)

Cllr Marsh reported the following: a meeting has been held with Terry Blaney and Mick Burgess to discuss funding options. There is a requirement for an all-weather surface for the existing initial section of path. There is also the need to submit a “call for sites” which if successful provides the best chance to add the final section of path within the field nearest to Appledore station. Cllr Marsh needs to provide an Ordinance Survey map for the “call for sites” submission. Cllr Lusk recommended using online application “Magic Maps.” Failing this, Cllr Marsh to purchase a map via Ordinance Survey – priced £83.40. Unanimously agreed.

6. Sandpiper Close update (RH, RK, KN & SMc)

S McIntyre reported that 2 solicitors have provided quotes for “completion” of the purchase of 5 Sandpiper Close: one for £4,446, the other £2640, both inclusive of VAT. There are several issues that need resolving e.g. type of tenancy, whether stamp duty applies, qualifying the 106 deed rental pricing conditions and checking the appropriate land and boundary freehold ownerships in place. The ABC Housing Allocation Manager has recommended APC seeks legal advice. S McIntyre is seeking additional quotes from solicitors specialising in local Parish Council / Housing Law and will provide a more detailed report at the 5 Sandpiper Close working group meeting on 11/11/2024.

7. Linear Park (GK, RH, SMc)

S McIntyre reported that Chris Vane has offered to join APC representatives for a meeting with Martello to discuss responsibilities in respect of Linear Park. Chris Vane has previous APC experience of this matter. In response to a member if the publics suggestion, **S McIntyre to research APC minutes going back 2017 to ascertain Martello’s commitments to Linear Park.**

8. Heathside update book exchange and defib (KN)

Cllr Nicol reported that ABC and UKPN legal teams still in discussion as to who is responsible for diverting the electricity cable. No further update.

9. Gov.uk domain and email addresses (GK, SMc)

S McIntyre provided Cllrs with a Central Digital and Data Office document entitled “Why should your Parish Council have a.gov.uk domain.” After discussion regarding the pros and cons Cllr Nicol proposed the council go ahead with purchasing a gov.uk domain and emails to improve professionalism and enhance data handling security. The proposal included choosing Hugo Fox as the favoured service provider based on best value for money; £27.48

plus vat per month with £399 set up charge (to be negotiated), seconded by Cllr Kinsley, unanimously agreed. **S McIntyre to agree terms with Hugo Fox.**

10. Police liaison update (KN)

No update.

11. Highways Improvement Plan resolution required (RK/RH)

S McIntyre read out Appledore's 5 Highway Improvement Plan (HIP) priority risks and the Appledore HIP working groups preferred options to tackling those risks. The working group is now seeking councilors' consideration and agreement to the preferred options:

Priority 1 The Street (Hawthorn) installation of 2 x playground warning signs with "SLOW" road markings at each end of the recreation ground to slow down traffic. In the absence of identifying an owner of the grass verge situated between the new house next to the Martello Development site and the entrance to Sandpiper Drive, for APC to advise Highways that they can install a sign to the said verge location. Highways have agreed to conduct a speed survey of The Street which will inform the worthiness of purchasing and installing Speed Indicator Devices.

Priority 2 The Street (Narrows) installation of a priority flow system, a pavement and bollards within the area known as the Narrows to reduce risk of injury to pedestrians.

Priority 3 Heathside extend the pavement and refresh "SLOW" markings on the offside as travelling in a northerly direction between Heathside and Fourwents crossroads.

Priority 4 Kenardington Road (Hornes Place) to install priority flow signage and refreshed "SLOW" markings to reduce vehicle speeds at the blind bend outside The Wish.

Priority 5 Tenterden Road preference of new signage warning for blind exit entrance from new housing development entrance to junction with The Street was declined by Highways. They advised the access was approved via the planning permission for the site. The Appledore HIP working group are proposing not to take this any further.

Cllr Hiskey proposed all APCs support for all the above preferences / recommendations, seconded by Cllr Nicol, unanimously agreed.

12. Court Lodge Car Park EV Community Amenities Grant (RK/SMc)

In Cllr Kimber's absence S McIntyre presented a precis of the Community Amenities Grant application for 2 x EV Chargers to be installed at Court lodge Car Park. Cllr Lusk raised concerns in respect of the viability of the project e.g. financial return and on-going maintenance costs. Cllr Hiskey proposed supporting continuation of the grant application process but to hold off any decision to progress the project until further discussion, around viability, at next APC meeting. Seconded by Cllr Thornton, unanimously agreed.

13. Policies review update

(i) Approval sought for new Safeguarding Policy (SMc)

(ii) Approval sought for reviewed APC Media Policy and, APC Public Communications & Public Enquiries Policy (RH)

Cllr Hiskey proposed above policies Item 13 (i) (ii) to be signed off as satisfactorily reviewed and amended, seconded by Cllr Kinsley, unanimously supported.

Cllr Hiskey reminded all councillors of the following requirement within the Media Policy: ***“the council must give prior approval to members of the council to provide written or verbal statements to the media or to write articles for publication.”***

(iii) legal guidance: LG (MP) 1976 S19 Recreation Facilities, LGA (72) S137 Incur Expenditure for Certain Purposes Not Otherwise Authorised, LGA (72) S139 Acceptance of Gifts and Property (RH)

Cllr Hiskey proposed that policies at Item 13 (iii) are likely to be suited to a Borough Council as opposed to a Parish Council. **S McIntyre to review and advise outcome at next meeting.**

(iv) Update on reviews of APC Privacy Notice, APC Publication of information Scheme, APC Record Retention Policy, APC & Data protection Policy (GK)

Cllr Kinsley proposed above policies Item 13 (iv) to be signed off as satisfactorily reviewed and amended, seconded by Cllr Hiskey, unanimously supported.

14. VH solar panels update (SMc)

S McIntyre reported he had sent Chris Self (Village Hall Trustee) a Change of Ownership form to allow the Village Hall to take back possession of the Solar Panels from APC. S McIntyre has also provided EDF with a current FIT reading which should lead to the village Hall receiving backdated FIT payments from October 2023.

15. Recreation ground update (GK)

Cllr Kinsley formally advised that he was leaving the Appledore Recreation Ground Management Committee due to work commitments but is willing to remain as the APC representative at committee meetings. Cllrs praised Cllr Kinsley for his achievements whilst on the committee.

Cllr Kinsley reported the Pavilion roof has been completed, new doors and windows installed, and a disabled access in place. Work still to do includes installing a new hatch inside the pavilion for social events and painting inner walls. There is more work to do regarding the Tennis Courts, although not enough funds to resurface, but enough for some cosmetic finishing. Picnic benches are now in place at the main entrance of the Pavilion.

16. Other matters

(i) Station antiques advertising cart (SMc)

Station Manager put back meeting of 5th November to 20th November 24.

(ii) Replacement / new posts on grass verges outside Church and The Street (near Village Hall)

Cllr Hiskey proposed contracting John Wickens to install 9 posts to verge situated outside the Church and adjacent to the public house. Seconded by Cllr Marsh, unanimously agreed. **S McIntyre to contact John Wickens to agree timescales for work.**

(iii) ABC update for Heathside 106 play park transfer of funding

No update.

(v) Car Park “clean up” update (PT)

Cllr Hiskey thanked Cllr Marsh and her husband Simon, and Cllr Thornton for their efforts in cleaning up the Court Lodge Road and Village Hall car parks. Cllr Thornton is researching plants such as Ferns that will help to prevent weed growth.

(vi) Village Hall Car Park repairs update (SMc)

S McIntyre reported that Iain Ramsden has undertaken urgent repairs to the Village Hall car park, tarmacking the pot hole and the eroded stone chipping section where it joins the granite setts divide. This cost £100. Cllr Hiskey thanked Iain for completing this work so quickly and at such a reasonable cost.

(vii) Parish Council document storage and sift update

No update.

(viii) Hedge maintenance update – Woodchurch Rd / Fourwents Junction (SMc)

The owner has trimmed the hedge. S McIntyre to call the owner regarding the road sign that remains partly obscured.

17. Correspondence includes: Old Way Lane flooding / Government consultation on joining council meetings remotely and proxy voting (SMc)

Old Way Lane flooding dealt with during Cllr Hills update – see above.

S McIntyre reminded Cllrs of the on-line link “CitizenSpace” to take part in the important government consultation regarding local council remote meetings and proxy voting.

Cllrs discussed a suggestion raised by Cllr Hiskey that for this year to purchase just one Christmas tree to be placed outside the Village Hall. No necessity to place a tree outside the Church as the next-door Black Lion pub display plentiful decorations / lights. This suggestion proposed by Cllr Thornton, seconded by Cllr Kinsley, unanimously agreed.

18. Future agenda items

To be confirmed.

19. Date of next meeting - Monday 2nd December 2024, 7.30pm, Appledore Village Hall.