

# Aylesford Parish Council

## Annual Meeting of the Council

### Minutes of the Meeting held at the Aylesford Football Club Pavilion, Aylesford on 14 May 2024

**Present:** Councillors Sullivan (Chairman), Balcombe, Craig, Mrs Eves, Fuller, Gledhill, Mrs Ogun, Rillie, Sharp and Shelley.

**In Attendance:** Mrs Randall (Clerk)

**Apologies:** Councillors Mrs Birkbeck, Chapman, Ms Dorrington, Mrs Gadd, Ludlow, Ms Oyewusi, Smith and Walker.

Apologies also received from Borough Councillors Dalton, Davis, Keers, McDermott and Williams and County Councillor Kennedy.

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#### 1. Election of Chairman of the Council and Declaration of Acceptance of Office

There was one nomination for Chairman, Councillor Sullivan.

A vote took place and Councillor Sullivan was unanimously elected and made his Declaration of Acceptance of Office before the Clerk.

#### 2. Apologies for absence

Apologies of Absence from Councillors Mrs Birkbeck, Chapman, Ms Dorrington, Mrs Gadd, Ludlow, Ms Oyewusi, Smith and Walker and Borough Councillors Dalton, Davis, Keers, McDermott and Williams were received, and the reasons for absence agreed. County Councillor Kennedy also gave his apologies which were agreed.

#### 3. Declarations of Interest additional to those contained in the Register of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest additional to those contained in the Register of Members Interests.

#### 4. Election of Vice-Chairman of Council

There was one nomination for Vice Chairman, Councillor John Balcombe. A vote took place by way of a show of hands and Councillor Balcombe was unanimously elected.

**5. To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 12 March 2024**

It was **Resolved** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed.

**6. Matters Arising from the previous minutes** (including those which required Member's action)

There were no Matters Arising from the previous minutes.

**7. Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman referred to the minibus trip around the Parish that took place on Monday 13 May and felt it was very informative. He informed members that the Clerk had taken various notes throughout the trip, she will put these together and the subject will be on the agenda of the next Environmental Services Committee meeting.

The Chairman thanked the Clerk for arranging the trip and extended his appreciation to the Supervisor for also coming along to open gates and height barriers etc.

**8. Adjournment of the meeting to allow for public participation** (pursuant to Standing Order 3 e & g Members of the public may make representations, answer questions, and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda. A member of the public shall not speak for more than the time set in the Standing Orders).

There were no Members of the Public present.

**9. To review and approve the Standing Orders**

It was **Resolved** to approve the Standing Orders including the amendment on p.6

**10. To review and approve the Annual Risk Assessment**

It was **Resolved** to approve the Annual Risk Assessment

**11. To review and approve the Financial Regulations**

It was **Resolved** to approve the Financial Regulations. The Clerk informed the Council that the Financial Regulations are currently being rewritten and Council will need to approve the new version once she has them from NALC/KALC.

**12. To review and approve the Financial Risk Assessment**

It was **Resolved** to approve the Financial Risk Assessment

**13. To review and approve the S101 Delegation of Powers**

It was **Resolved** to approve the S101 Delegation of Powers, with the committee consisting of 5 members: Councillors Sullivan, Balcombe, Mrs Gadd, Smith and Shelley.

**14. To review and approve the Terms of Reference of Committees and Sub Committees**

It was **Resolved** to approve the Terms of Reference

**15. To review and adopt the Kent Code of Conduct for Members**

It was **Resolved** to adopt the Kent Code of Conduct for Members

**16. To review the Asset Register**

It was **Resolved** to approve the Asset Register

**17. To review the Grant Award Policy**

It was **Resolved** to approve the Grant Award Policy including the amendment on p. 7, no. 8.

**18. To review and adopt the Information and Data Protection Policy**

It was **Resolved** to adopt the Information and Data Protection Policy

**19. To review and adopt the Privacy Notice**

It was **Resolved** to adopt the Privacy Notice

**20. To review and adopt the Code of Practice for Handling Complaints**

It was **Resolved** to adopt the Code of Practice for Handling Complaints

**21. To review and adopt the Cyber Security Policy**

It was **Resolved** to adopt Cyber Security

## 22. Appointments to Committees and Sub Committees

The appointments to the Committees and Sub Committees were **Agreed** as follows

### Policy & Resources

Balcombe (Vice Chairman)	Ludlow
Mrs Birkbeck	Ms Oyewusi
Ms Dorrington	Mrs Ogun
Chapman	Rillie
Craig	Shelley
Mrs Eves	Sharp
Fuller	Smith
Mrs Gadd	Sullivan (Chairman)
Gledhill	Walker
Hammond	

### Environmental Services

Balcombe	Ludlow
Mrs Birkbeck	Ms Oyewusi
Ms Dorrington	Mrs Ogun
Chapman	Rillie
Craig	Shelley
Mrs Eves	Sharp
Fuller	Smith
Mrs Gadd	Sullivan
Gledhill	Walker
Hammond	

### Planning

Balcombe (Vice Chairman)	Ms Oyewusi
Mrs Birkbeck	Mrs Ogun
Ms Dorrington	Rillie
Chapman	Shelley
Craig	Sharp
Mrs Eves	Smith
Fuller	Sullivan
Mrs Gadd	Walker
Gledhill	
Ludlow	

### Finance Advisory Sub Committee

Balcombe (Vice Chairman)	Ludlow
Mrs Birkbeck	Ms Oyewusi
Ms Dorrington	Mrs Ogun
Chapman	Rillie
Craig	Shelley
Mrs Eves	Sharp
Fuller	Smith
Mrs Gadd	Sullivan (Chairman)
Gledhill	Walker
Hammond	

### **Staffing Committee (max of 9)**

Balcombe (Vice Chairman)	Smith
Mrs Birkbeck	Sullivan (Chairman)
Ms Dorrington	
Mrs Eves	
Mrs Gadd	
Shelley	

Reserve List – Iain Craig

### **Sports Committee (max of 9)**

Balcombe	Sullivan
Mrs Gadd	
Ms Dorrington	
Shelley	
Smith	

**The election of Chairman and Vice Chairman of Environmental Services, Planning and Sports Committees will take place at the first meeting of these committees after the Annual Meeting**

### **S101 Delegation of Powers**

Chairman - Sullivan
Vice Chairman - Balcombe
Mrs Gadd
Shelley
Smith

### **23. To Appoint Representatives to Outside Bodies**

The appointments to the Outside Bodies were **Agreed** as follows

<b>Aylesford Village Community Centre</b>	Vacant
<b>Blue Bell Hill Village Hall</b>	Mrs Eves, Smith
<b>Tunbury Hall</b>	Ms Oyewusi, Shelley
<b>KALC</b>	Shelley
<b>TMBC Parish Partnership Panel</b>	Shelley
<b>Rochester Airport</b>	Craig, Shelley
<b>United Charities of Burham</b>	Smith

### **24. Casual Vacancies**

There is currently one vacancy for Eccles Ward

## **25. Decisions taken under S101 Delegated Authority**

The Clerk reported that two decisions had been taken.

**Planning Application TM/24/00261/PA 565 Maidstone Road, Blue Bell Hill**– questions were raised during item 3 of the agenda of the 12 March 2024 regarding item 4.3 of the Planning Minutes of 5 March 2024. The accuracy of the minutes of 5 March were agreed as presented but members wanted an additional comment to be made regarding the planning application.

The Clerk consulted with relevant members and the additional comment was submitted to TMBC.

**Deposit payment for Solar Panel Installation** – the companies’ terms of payment are three instalments; however, the Parish Council should try to avoid paying for goods/services upfront if it can. The Clerk negotiated paying the deposit then the rest on completion subject to there being no issues with the work, therefore missing the middle payment. The relevant members were consulted, and it was agreed the Clerk proceed with paying the deposit.

## **26. To receive the report of the County Councillor**

See attached report at Appendix A.

## **27. To receive the reports of the Borough Councillors**

See attached report at Appendix B.

## **28. Committee Reports/Minutes: to consider and adopt; to deal with any matters arising**

### **Policy and Resources – 9 April and 7 May 2024**

It was **Resolved** that the Minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee meeting held on 9 April 2024 and 7 May 2024 be approved as a correct record.

### **Environmental Services – 19 March and 16 April 2024**

It was **Resolved** that the Minutes of the Environmental Services Committee meeting held on 19 March 2024 and 16 April 2024 be approved as a correct record.

### **Planning – 19 March, 9 and 16 April and 7 May 2024**

It was **Resolved** that the Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 19 March, 9 April and 16 April and 7 May 2024 be approved as a correct record.

## **29. Accounts for Payment**

The Council considered the Payment Schedule attached to the Agenda and Councillor Balcombe proposed and Councillor Craig seconded and it was **Resolved** that 17 payments totalling £5,306.34 be made.

## **30. To consider the renewal of the Council's Annual Insurance Policy**

The Chairman explained that two quotes had been obtained, one of which is from a new company the Council hasn't used before and time is needed to go through them carefully to ensure there is a like for like comparison.

The Chairman proposed that himself and Councillors Balcombe and Craig look through the quotes and make the decision in conjunction with the Clerk.

It was **Unanimously Agreed** to proceed.

**Closed**

## **31. To consider any other items of correspondence**

Councillor Craig expressed his appreciation for the work the Supervisor must carry out around the Parish, he did not realise just how much work there is to be done.

## **32. Duration of Meeting**

7.30pm to 8.19pm

## **Andrew Kennedy's KCC Report**

Almost 20 years of restricted government funding, along with inflation linked increases in council tax, against a backdrop of increasing demand for services, has left much of local government in a perilous financial position.

Over 100 local councils; districts, counties and powerful unitary councils such as Birmingham and Croydon, have technically gone bankrupt or issued warning notification that they are about to do so. Kent County Council is not in that position, but I would be lying to say that things are not very tough. Tens of millions of savings required to produce a legally balanced budget over the coming years will leave KCC with no option to look at some core services. The alternative to this is a Section 114 notice, which will result in government commissioners moving in and imposing 10% increase in council tax while stopping all discretionary spending.

It is ironic, that a badly managed council which goes bankrupt is then allowed to increase council tax and will receive additional government emergency funding, but a well-managed council (such as Kent) trying it's best to balance it books, is starved of resources and forced to make cuts. We appear as a county to reward failure while punishing success.

The biggest issue KCC faces is the cost of Adult Social Care. As the Deputy Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health (and Kent's Mental Health Champion) I see at first-hand how difficult this is. The Adult Social Care budget is £600 million a year – almost half of the entire KCC budget, but the money is spent on just 2% of Kent's population. This is 10x the money spent of Highway repairs and potholes. No wonder so few people understand where the money goes.

However, we are dealing with some of the most vulnerable people in society, whose very life depends on the care we provide. These range from people with severe disabilities who cannot be looked after at home, to residents with dementia and older people who fall ill and whose families cannot (or will not) look after them. There are people in Kent who are so limited in what they can do that they require 24-hour care from more than one carer – at a cost of over £100,000 each.

The other issue is people being discharged early by the NHS to release bed capacity. These vulnerable people will almost always need to go into a nursing or acute care home, and once they do the cost of their care transfers from the NHS to KCC.

I will give you one example of the challenge we face. Last year demand for adult social care increased by 10%. This equated to an additional £60 million of statutory spending. The 4.99% increase in Council Tax brought in an additional £47 million. Therefore, the maximum allowed increase in council tax did not even cover the increased cost of social care – let alone cover any increases in highways, potholes, schools, country parks, HWRCs or anything else provided by KCC.

Locally I continue to do my best for the community. As you will know I stopped the installation of the Magic Roundabout at Quarry Wood, and I recently stopped the removal of the Rochester Road Speed Bumps. I am now campaigning to ringfence the money that was going to spent on their removal to be spent instead on their upgrade.

I secured money for quarterly cleaning of the soakaways on the Quarry Wood / A20 junction (and monthly cleaning in the winter). Despite the wettest winter for a decade, incidents of A20 flooding were reduced to just 3 days against 42 days last year. I am continuing to push Kent Highways to



continue their discussions with Crown Estates to secure consent for the installation of an attenuation tank under the car park in front of Homebase.

I am pushing the management of Royal British Legion Industries to address the rat-running through Admiral Moore Drive, which is in their hands (not KCCs). This is a major (and increasing) issue for the residents of the RBL Retirement Courts, who face ever higher traffic volumes as motorists try to bypass the Hall Road / A20 lights. The section of road outside Prince Philip Lodge is owned by RBL and is not part of the highway. KCC would have no objection whatsoever to RBLI closing this via a barrier or planters, but for some reason – despite meetings – RBLI won't do so or explain why.

I continue to support local community groups and charities via my KCC Members' Grant and my privately managed Community Pot. The Community Pot is a sum of money arising from me not accepting a pay increase and paying this money into a fund which I use to top-up the KCC Grant. Over the last year I have given the following grants in Aylesford Parish:

- Valley Invicta Primary School in Teapot Lane: £500 for Buddy Benches to tackle loneliness
- Holcombe and Blue Bell Hill Cricket Club: £300 for a children's secure play area
- Blue Bell Hill Village Hall Committee: £300 for a new sound system
- Eccles Pre-School: £300 for educational toys
- Aylesford School Teapot Lane; £500 to finance their dementia café for the next 6 months
- Aylesford Dementia Café in the Brassey Centre: £300 to cover their running 2024 costs
- St Peter's Primary: £500 to the annual school trip to France
- Aylesford Village Community Centre: £300 towards new refrigeration for the beer cellar
- Aylesford Scouts: £300 for new camping stoves
- Aylesford Girls FC: £300 for new kit

And, of course, all of Aylesford's primary school children received sunflower seeds to grow over summer, and in December over 150 veterans and community heroes attended my annual carol concert and buffet support at the Capel Morris Centre. Both of these events were financed by me from personal donations or money I raised in sponsorship from local businesses and friends.

Finally, I have been told (verbally, not yet in writing) that my bid for £3,000 of community cohesion funding from TMBC has been successful, and I can now push ahead with my Community Bridge website, listing all community and voluntary groups (over 200 of them) which operate in our local area. This is a trailblazing scheme (the first of its kind in the UK) which I believe will benefit residents, social prescribers, GPs, parish councils and all those involved in community activities locally. It will provide a simple to use point of reference for local groups to advertise what they offer, and for local people to make contact and find out more – free of charge for both groups and users. I am hugely grateful to Cllr Des Keers for informing me of this funding and for his support in the application process.

Andrew Kennedy  
13 May 2024

## **REPORT TO AYLESFORD PARISH COUNCIL 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024**

By the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Councillors for

### **Aylesford North and North Downs Ward**

**Councillors Dave Davis, Alex McDermott and Roger Dalton**

### **Aylesford South and Ditton Ward**

**Councillors Rob Cannon, Steve Hammond and Colin Williams**

### **Walderslade Ward**

**Councillor Des Keers**

### **ALL WARDS ITEMS**

#### **ANNUAL COUNCIL AND NEW MAYOR**

1. TMBC's Annual Council meeting is on Tuesday 14 April and, subject to the approval of members, it is expected our Council colleague, Steve Hammond will be elected as Mayor of Tonbridge & Malling for the next 12 months. Chairing full council meetings, when we have such a finely balanced council, will be a challenge but his lengthy experience as veteran relations and brand manager at RBLI, will hold him in good stead with the varied civic duties he will undertake. We wish him all the best.

#### **CAR PARKS**

2. TMBC is a top performing council when it comes to managing its finances and, although it goes unnoticed by most residents, it is a massive advantage to them in low TMBC Council Tax and high-grade services.

3. However, for about 2 years, we at TMBC, have seen a gap developing in the TMBC revenue budget where central government grants have been reduced and our Council Tax capped at 3% when average annual inflation has been more than 10%.

4. Sadly, the only viable solution, short of cutting already stretched services, has meant that we have had to start charging for the use of our car parks.

5. Car parking charges are a revenue stream that is tightly controlled by law and can only be spent on items laid down in law. However, there is sufficient flexibility in that, to pay for many of the revenue items to plug the impending gap.

6. This revenue shortfall has led to a review of the charging for car parks across the Borough. Generally, each car park had a unique set of issues such as legal covenants, supermarket partners or a preponderance of user types.

7. Your two local TMBC car parks affected are considered below.

## **Aylesford Bridge Car Parks**

8. This policy badly affects our residents and Aylesford, where TMBC will be charging for the two Bailey Bridge Car Parks.

9. We were able to get some reductions in the costs for residents:

- a. A reduction from an initial proposal of £290 to £120 for an annual season ticket for a specific car.
- b. Exclusive use some parking spaces for season ticket holding residents.
- c. An hour's free parking, which will handle the school drop off,
- d. No charges to be implemented until the car park is extended to take some more cars. The latter concession means there will probably be no charges for about a year.

10. Cllr R Dalton did not support these charges from the outset and was one of the 5 members from across the Borough that added his name to call the Cabinet decision into OS committee.

## **Martins Square**

11. Though not in your parish, this car park is used extensively by our residents for access to the shops and surgery.

12. Here the principal concern was the passing trade using the shops and shop staff parking.

13. The final decision was that car parking charges are to be introduced but with one hour's free parking to deal with the bulk of the passing trade and with season tickets available at £120 per annum for shop staff.

## **AGILE**

14. There has been no change since our last report.

## **AYLESFORD NORTH & NORTH DOWNS ISSUES**

### **ASB SURVEY IN BLUE BELL HILL**

15. There have been no reports of further ASB activity and so officially this case is now dormant. However, it will be reopened if there are more reports of ASB.

### **ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS IN PROGRESS**

#### **Nursery Rochester Road Aylesford**

16. The planning application TM/23/01072/FL. Proposed change of use of land, on Rochester Road, Aylesford, from a nursey (plants) to mixed equestrian and a holiday park comprising 7 mobile homes, 4 serviced camper van places and a recreational area. This application has been appealed and is now with the Planning Inspectorate. All other enforcement action must wait for the outcome of that appeal.

### **Land Rear of Mackenders Lane Eccles Aylesford Kent**

17. There is a farm building that has been built in the last few months but that now is understood to be complete. It is a building for farm use such as storing farm machinery in. This building is permitted development.

18. There is also a caravan on site that is been occupied during the period of construction of the permanent building above. There has been a legal query on this use and there will be another officer visit in the week starting 13<sup>th</sup> May.

### **Land On Former Scout Camp Warren Road**

19. There was an officer visit to this site in the week beginning 22<sup>nd</sup> April and the buildings under construction there have been added to the enforcement notice.

### **Land North of Lower Warren Road And East Of Warren Road**

20. A planning inspector visited this site on 30<sup>th</sup> April and hopefully that appeal of the enforcement notice will be decided soon by the Inspectorate.

## **AYLESFORD SOUTH AND DITTON**

21. There are no specific Aylesford South and Ditton items to report this time.

## **WALDESLADE WARD**

22. There are no specific Aylesford South and Ditton items to report this time.