

Minutes

Meeting held in Studdal Church Hall on Tuesday 3rd January 2023 at 7.30 pm.
Cllr Merriman opened the meeting by wishing councillors and visitors a Happy New Year.

1. Present and Apologies

Present

B Merriman (Chair)
G Akhurst
D Willet
R Buxton
A Nigol (Clerk)
5 members of the public

Apologies

L Steger
A Calthorpe
H Densham
DDC Member Nick Kenton
KCC Member Steve Manion

2. Declarations of interest

Cllr Merriman declared an interest on item 6. Finance.

3. Approval of the minutes 6th December 2022

The minutes were proposed as a true record of the meeting by Cllr Merriman seconded by Cllr Buxton and all members voted in favour.

4. Matters arising from the minutes 6th December 2022

Follow up on some of the risks on playing field which have been resolved by the wetter weather, especially the expansion of joints and footings which are no longer loose. Cllr Willet kindly offered to replace a piece of split timber that seated two bolts as soon as possible.

5. Visitors

An increasing number of potholes was reported by the member of public especially on Roman Road and Homestead Lane. Clerk to contact Kent Highways to do an urgent survey. There's been more traffic through the parish with many using the roads as a short cut.

The local bus routes to Dover will stop their services in February. Clerk to check with KCC whether there are any alternatives and chance of getting the service back even if it's once or twice a week.

6. Finance

Cllr Merriman left the meeting.

i) To approve the payment schedule for December was proposed by Cllr Akhurst seconded by Cllr Buxton and all members voted in favour.

Chq No.

001529 Clerk	December wages	£468.00
001530 Clerk	December ex - Onedrive	£13.68
001531 B Merriman	Festive refreshments December meeting	£10.74

Cllr Merriman returned to the meeting.

ii) Bank reconciliation at 24th December 2022. Due to postal strike action, the bank statements didn't arrive on time therefore to go on February meeting agenda.

7. Precept/Budget

Discuss/agree 2023/4 precept. To request £14,858 from DDC as the precept figure. It was noted in the current year no increase was sought however outgoings have increased materially and the new figure represents a 12.5% increase to the last precept. This was proposed by Cllr Merriman seconded by Cllr Willet and all members voted in favour. Clerk to organise signing and return of paperwork to DDC.

8. Notification of external auditor appointment for the 2022-2023 financial year for the 5 years period.

During the October meeting the Council decided to remain opted into of external auditor appointment for the next five-year period. The new appointed external auditor for the Parish council is Mazars LLP.

9. Renewal of Grass Cutting Contract.

The current contract is coming to an end 31st March 2023. The Council agreed that following areas need to be cut in the future, which are playing fields, Millennium bank, picnic area and memorial garden. It was agreed that all areas of the playing fields should be kept cut short all through the summer. Clerk to ask current contractor if they would like to quote and to request quotes from two other contractors. The quotes are for keeping those areas cut throughout the year rather than for a specified number of cuts. The quotes will be added to the February meeting agenda.

10. Local Community

- i) Update on salt bins. It was reported by Cllr Merriman that Boys Hill salt bin has vanished. Clerk to contact Highways for replacement if possible. Cllr Merriman agreed to check whether Downs Close salt bin was one that belong to the Parish. Cllr Densham had confirmed he has received salt from KCC and would be replenishing the Parish's salt bins.
- ii) Fly tipping on Willow Woods Road, Little Mongeham. Clerk reported it to the DDC and it has been collected.
- iii) Defibrillator update. Defibrillator batteries and pads been checked by the clerk and updated in the National Defibrillator Network
- iv) Update on blocked drain outside the nursery. The issue was reported on 6th September and still has not been completed. Clerk had an email confirming that the drains were to be cleared in November. Another follow up email has been sent to the Drainage Asset Technician at KCC. Clerk to follow up.
- v) Update on works at Millennium bank overhanging branches and the trees below the BMX track. Whole Millennium bank works have now been completed by Cllr Willet and Cllr Akhurst. Works at Jacks Bush and BMX track to be completed in coming days. Cllr Merriman thanked everyone involved.

11. Local Planning

For consideration:

- i) 22/01661. Land To North-East of Martin Gorse Water Supply Works, Waterworks Hill, West Langdon, CT15 5JW. Council decided not to comment.

To note:

- i) CON/20/01546/CC Fir Tree Farm Chapel Lane Ashley Kent CT15 5HY. 7- Samples of materials- Condition approved.
- ii) CON/19/01473/DD Newlands Farm Stoneheap Road East Studdal Dover Kent CT15 5BU 10 - Foul Drainage. Condition approved.
- iii) CON/19/01473/CC Newlands Farm Stoneheap Road East Studdal CT15 5BU 8- Drainage. Condition approved.

12. Report from DDC/KCC

No report.

13. Allotments & Orchard

- i) Grant funding application completed on line. No update yet. To go on February meeting agenda.
- ii) The new measurements for two new plots update. Cllr Willet agreed to measure the plots and give an update.
- iii) Update on the allotment waiting list. Clerk contacted all people on the waiting list and at the moment there is one person out of four still interested.

14. Orchard pruning. It was agreed not to prune the orchard this year, however most trees would need grease bands to protect them from winter moth caterpillars in the spring. Clerk to check for the prices of grease bands. A spend of up to Fifty pounds on grease bands was proposed by Cllr Merriman seconded by Cllr Akhurst and all members voted in favour.

15. Correspondence

- i) DDC Housing Needs survey will open 10th January and run until 7th March 2023. The flyers been posted on notice boards and Clerk to publish the information on parish website.
- ii) NALC email update on annual council meeting dates for councils with elections and Coronation bank holiday. Election is on 4th of May and the bank holiday is on the 8th of May. It was agreed have the AGM and monthly meeting both on 9th of May. The AGM will start at 7.15 pm followed by the monthly meeting at 7.30 pm. Notices go out one day earlier, on Wednesday 3rd of May. Date later in May to be agreed for the Annual Parish Meeting (APM)
- iii) Local residents reported about the empty salt bins near the Three Horse Shoes. Clerk reported this to Highways and bins were updated.
- iv) Email confirming Kent Highways new Highways Manager Tom Williams starting on 3rd January 2023
- v) Update on Village Green application from KCC. Cllr Akhurst contacted KCC about the progress of the application submitted 2017. Unfortunately, KCC has no trace about the application. Cllr Akhurst called KCC who said that one explanation is that it was missing some information and was therefore returned to the applicant. Cllr Akhurst has confirmed he had not received any such return. Still no update on investigation. Clerk to follow up with KCC.

16. Any other business to report/matters to discuss

Litter pick Saturday 15th April was fixed as the date for holding a litter pick in the parish. Clare Inglin, kindly offered to take the lead in organising the event. Clerk to advertise the event in Rural Roundup, on parish website and create the posters for the notice boards. A spend of up to Fifty pounds on the refreshments was proposed by Cllr Merriman seconded by Cllr Willet and all members voted in favour. Apologies from Cllr Merriman and Cllr Buxton who are unable to attend the February meeting.

17. Date and status of next meeting

Monthly Tuesday 7th February 2023 7.30pm – Studdal Church Hall

Meeting closed: 20:24

A Nigol

Parish Clerk