

## Minutes

Meeting held in Studdal Church Hall on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2023 at 7.30 pm.

### 1. Present and Apologies

#### Present

B Merriman (Chair)  
D Willet  
H Densham  
KCC Member Steve Manion  
A Nigol (Clerk)  
3 members of the public

#### Apologies

R Buxton  
DDC Member Nick Kenton

### 2. Declarations of interest

Cllr Merriman declared an interest in item 6 i) Finance.

### 3. Approval of the minutes 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023

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

### 4. Matters arising from the minutes 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023

- i) No further updates from DDC Enforcement officers regarding the current enforcement cases within the parish. Clerk to follow up.
- ii) KCC Highways are looking into blocked drains in Roman Road and Ashley. Clerk to follow up.
- iii) Apple Day. The Chair thanked everyone who attended.
- iv) Concerns about DEFRA funding cuts regarding the hedge cutting. Clerk had written to the local MP about the issue regarding the hedge cutting and had a response requesting some more information and clarification. Cllr Densham to provide and Clerk to follow up.

### 5. Visitors

- i) A member of the public queried about the misplaced and broken sign posts in East Studdal. They have been reported to KCC Highways and Clerk is waiting them to confirm the date when they will be fixed.
- ii) A bursting pipe was reported at the top of the Boys Hill. The local residents have reported the issue to Affinity Water couple of times, but there have been no further updates. Clerk to report to Highways and inform the fire brigade as it might have an impact on the water pressure. Cllr Manion offered to report it to the fire brigade.

## 6. Finance

i) To approve the payment schedule for October was proposed by Cllr Willet seconded by Cllr Densham. Cllr Merriman abstained from voting.

Chq No.

001569 Clerk	September wages	£468.00
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001570 Clerk	September ex - Onedrive	£13.68
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001571 P Evans	Grass cutting July-August-September&September allotment	£1000.00
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001572 Kent County Council	Allotment rental 05.04.23-04.10.23	£17.50
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001523 B Merriman	Apple day refreshments	£14.95
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ii) Bank reconciliation at 24<sup>th</sup> September 2023. The bank statements for September didn't arrive on time, therefore to go on November meeting agenda.

Cllr Merriman agreed to call the bank and request for a copy of the statements if they don't arrive in next couple of days.

iii) The Council agreed the occasional car user petrol allowance 50p/per mile for the parish clerk, should he be asked to attend a training or any other event agreed by the Council. It was proposed by Cllr Merriman seconded by Cllr Willet and members voted in favour.

## 7. Precept and Budget

Councillors considered the budget for 2024/5 circulated by the Clerk and the run rate in the current year. Councillor Merriman explained that the main elements responsible for the proposed increase in precept for 2024/5 are the renewal of the grass cutting contract, the new allotment grass cutting agreement and increase in insurance cover. Any actual precept amount would be considered at the December meeting.

## 8. Local Community

i) DDC proposed change to garden waste service. A letter was sent to DDC about the concerns of green bags being replaced with the new green waste bins.

Clerk also received a response from the Councillor responsible for the planning and built environment confirming the following: "The changes were not able to be brought to Public Consultation, because when the original contract was agreed (by the previous administration) the change from sacks to bins was part of that agreement. This was further endorsed by the Cabinet meeting in December 2022.

As a District Council we have a responsibility to all the residents in the District and I don't believe that these changes will have a disproportionate impact on residents in rural areas, as I am sure you are aware Green waste is not a statutory obligation of the District Council and as a subscription service we are duty bound to operate it as an efficient, cost effective service that does not burden the Council Tax payer.

The changes are dictated by excessive weight in the current green bags as you quite rightly say the bags have a capacity of 80 litres of volume, but are restricted by 20kg of weight for manual handling, therefore if grass cuttings etc are compressed the six

bags have a total capacity of 120kg the new bins have a total capacity of 240kg, which is considerably bigger than neighbouring Councils who have only 180kg bins.

As with all our Waste streams, we recognise that the varied properties will have different challenges in relation to storing waste for collection, but unfortunately, we have only very limited options in order to provide an efficient, cost-effective service for the District.”

Clerk also received an email from the member of the public raising her concerns about the changes to the green waste bin collection. Clerk to respond to the member of the public with an update.

- ii) Cutting back the verges and hedges. It has been reported to the Highways that previously a wrong machinery was used and they are looking into this.

## **9. Local Planning**

For consideration by Councillors:

- i) 23/01109 Greenways , Forge Lane, Sutton, CT15 5DG

Conversion of barn to residential, single storey front extension, garage, cycle/bin store, excavations to widen vehicular access.

The application is a re-submission of 22/01/01106 of August 2022. That application was refused.

The Council discussed the planning application and decided to leave it up to Dover District Council to decide as it's a conversion and not newly built building. Clerk to submit response to DDC Planning.

Noted:

- i) CON/18/00125/B East Studdal Nurseries Downs Road East Studdal Kent CT155DB 5 - Contamination Risk Assessment. Condition approved.

## **10. Resubmission of application to KCC to adopt Three Horseshoes Green as a Village Green**

The Clerk received a copy of the application form pack in relation to Village Green applications from KCC.

The Parish Council have been asked to provide evidence of recreational use of the land by local residents for a period of at least 20 years. This can be submitted using the evidence questionnaire in the application pack. The Chair asked if any of the Councillors or visitors have any photographic evidence to bring it with them to the next meeting. To go on November meeting agenda.

## **11. Report from DDC/KCC**

KCC member Steve Manion reported on the following:

DDC is reviewing the polling stations, whether they are acceptable and have all the facilities available.

Jobs and skills fair at the cruise terminal coming up in October.

The Council can ask a local police officer to come and visit and attend the Parish Council meeting for an update.

KCC is investigating the Blue Badge misuse.

#### **12. Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) of Council owned electrical equipment**

There are three items that are owned by the Council and they need annual testing. Cllr Merriman suggested a local resident who is licenced and registered to do the testing. The fee would be £25.00

It was proposed by Cllr Merriman seconded by Cllr Densham and all members voted in favour. Clerk to contact and agree the date.

#### **13. Playing Field**

i) ROSPA Report – The Councillors discussed about the future of the BMX track and whether it should be converted into a wild flower meadow or green area. To go on the March 2025 meeting agenda. Clerk to write to ROSPA and let them know, once the BMX track is gone.

ii) Council to decide on replacing the broken clips on football nets. Clerk to get a quote for 24 new clips and 2 junior goal post arms. To go on November meeting agenda.

#### **14. Allotments & Orchard**

- i) Allotment vacancy. One person potentially interested and Clerk has sent the details. Clerk to follow up.
- ii) Grant funding application update. The application has been submitted however no update yet.
- iii) The Council discussed the removal of the shed. The shed needs to be taken down and cart away. Clerk to contact a couple of companies to get a quote to remove it from the site.
- iv) Member of the public asked about the apple trees. This will be discussed under the item 18.

#### **15. Maintenance Inspection of Physical Assets 2023**

The list was presented by Cllr Merriman and reviewed by the Council and actions were agreed. Clerk to chase KCC Highways regarding the missing salt bin at Boys Hill.

#### **16. Correspondence**

- i) The Council received an update from KALC about the delays from the external auditors. Clerk to contact Mazars for an update and publish a small notice on the website and notice boards about the possible delay.
- ii) DDC have circulated The Green infrastructure strategy consultation. Council to decide whether they want to submit their comments. To go on the November meeting agenda.

#### **17. Co-opt to fill the Parish Councillor vacancy.**

The Council has at the moment three vacancies. The Council have had a nomination and the information was circulated to the Councillors. Douglas Vickers to be co-opted. This was proposed by Cllr Merriman, seconded by Cllr Densham and voted all in

favour. Clerk to contact DDC Elections team and set up an email for the new councillor.

**18. Any other business to report/matters to discuss**

Some of the apple trees in the Community Orchard have grown a lot and will need some pruning. Clerk to research for the potential contractor to do the pruning. To go on the November meeting agenda. Clerk to order road salt from KCC Highways to be delivered to Cllr Densham.

**19. Date and status of next meetings**

Monthly Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2023 7.30pm – Studdal Church Hall

Meeting closed at 21:00

Signed: Barbara Merriman

Date: 7<sup>th</sup> November 2023

Paper copy on file with Clerk