DITTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF DITTON PARISH COUNCIL HELD BY ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE CALL ON MONDAY 8^{TH} MARCH 2021

PRESENT: CLLRS. J LOVER (CHAIRMAN), N NEWMAN (VICE-CHAIRMAN), MRS J DEARDEN,

MRS K DENNISON, MRS G GODDEN, A LAIDOUCI, A MULCUCK, C ROOK, MRS A

THROSSELL & MRS J THWAITES.

MRS N GREENAWAY [Clerk of the Council],

BOROUGH CLLR D COOPER

121. OPENING OF MEETING

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.00pm.

122. APOLOGIES

Apologies were **RECEIVED** from Cllr Porter. The previously notified reason for absence was **ACCEPTED** and **APPROVED** and recorded in the absence book Ref.464. Apologies were also received from Borough Councillor Cannon, KCC Warden Sue Absolon and PCSO Amy Sears.

123. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Cllrs Mrs Thwaites and Mulcuck declared a personal interest in item 128(e) as they are members of Ditton Heritage Centre.

124. CASUAL VACANCIES

The Clerk advised that she had received two enquiries from local residents about joining the Council. It was **NOTED** information had been sent out but no applications had yet been received.

125. CONFIRMATION & SIGNING OF MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD 18TH JANUARY 2021

The minutes of the above meeting were **CONFIRMED** and **SIGNED** as a true record.

126. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

127. **CORRESPONDENCE** [circulated via email where possible]

(a) For Noting

The follow items had been **READ** and **NOTED**:

KALC: KALC News January 2021

NALC: <u>Chief Executive Bulletins</u>

Local Councils: <u>Update - Jan/Feb 2021 & March 2021</u>

(b) For Decision

KALC: KALC T&M Area Committee, Meeting 25th March [emailed 03.03.21]

RESOLVED Cllrs Mrs Dearden and Mulcuck will attend this meeting.

NALC Model Design Code Consultation [emailed 01.03.21]

READ and **NOTED**.

128. **FINANCE**

(a) Accounts For Payment

RESOLVED the following payments be APPROVED and RATIFIED:-

February Payroll Summary

Monthly	Gross	£19,142.57
	Net	£13,027.26

Accounts for Payment

February BACS Payments (not previously listed)

02.02.21	N Saunders	Reimbursement	£12.99
12.02.21	HR Services Partnership	HR Support	£426.00
15.02.21	KCC Pension	Monthly Contributions	£2,414.61
15.02.21	HMRC	Monthly Contribution	£3,245.50
15.02.21	KALC	Planning Training Course	£120.00

RESOLVED the following payments, already APPROVED, be RATIFIED:-

February Accounts (approved and paid 19.02.21)

Community Centre				
Kent Boilercare	Office/Bar Boiler repair		64.28	
		VAT	12.86	£77.14
Chubb	Fire Alarm service		165.96	
		VAT	33.19	£199.15
Envirocure	Monthly Legionella		48.33	
		VAT	9.67	£58.00
F&A				
KCS	Stationary		129.15	
		VAT	25.83	£154.98
Matt Stephens	Christmas Lights		125.00	£125.00
Rialtas	Financial Software annual		673.00	
	subscription	VAT	134.60	£807.60
Commercial Services	Vehicle Lease		302.78	
		VAT	60.56	£363.34
OSA				
Travis Perkins	Ladder		90.00	
		VAT	18.00	£108.00

Capital	Disposable Gloves		32.00	
		VAT	6.40	£38.40
Ernest Doe	Tractor Oil		30.00	
		VAT	6.00	£36.00
Atlas Facilities	Annual Alarm Response		334.00	
		VAT	66.80	£400.80

(b) Direct Debits

RESOLVED the following direct debits be ACCEPTED and APPROVED:-

February Direct Debits

04.02.21	HMRC	Games Machine Duty	£21.21
08.02.21	Rentokil	Washroom Services	£274.03
12.02.21	FDMS	Card Charges	£27.90
15.02.21	Banline	Monthly Charges	£38.51
15.02.21	Safety Effect	Monthly H&S	£114.00
15.02.21	DHFE	Till Rental	£117.60
15.02.21	Paymentsense	Card Machine Rental	£54.00
16.02.21	Sage	Monthly Subscription	£153.00
25.02.21	Host My Office	IT Support	£350.40
25.02.21	NEST	Monthly Pension	£437.75
25.02.21	BOC	Bar Gas	£56.05
26.02.21	Paymentsense	Card Charges	£17.82
26.02.21	NCS	Equipment Rental	£24.16
26.02.21	NCS	Telephone Charges	£39.95
26.02.21	Veolia	Waste Collection	£121.45

(c) Debit Card Payments

RESOLVED the following debit card payments be ACCEPTED and APPROVED:-

February Debit Card

05.02.21	Funnel Knight Training	Personal Licence Course	£150.00
09.02.21	Acrylic Sheet	Noticeboard	£28.20
12.02.21	Zoom	Subscription	£11.99

(d) Bar Price Increases

It was **NOTED** that Heineken was increasing prices and proposed increases to the bar tariff had been circulated and approved by Community Centre Committee members.

RESOLVED to approve the proposed price increases and these be effective from 1st April.

(e) Annual Charity Donations

Requests received for financial support together with a schedule of previous donations were **READ** and **NOTED**. It was **NOTED** that no income had been added to the Council's charities account this year because there had been no dances and the funds in the account is raise by raffles held at the dances. However it was **NOTED** that there was still over £1,900.00 in the account.

RESOLVED to make the following donations from this Council's charities account:-

Under Local Government Act 1972, Sec 142

£50 to Tonbridge & Malling Citizens Advice Bureau

Under Local Government Act 1972, Sec 144

£100 to Ditton Heritage Centre

Under Local Government Act 1972, Sec 137

£250 to Kent Air Ambulance £225 to Heart of Kent Hospice

£ 50 to Communigrow

£ 50 to National Search and Rescue Dog Association

(f) Parish Council Vehicle Lease

It was **NOTED** that the current lease for the Parish Vehicle ends in October this year and that the cost is currently £3,624.00 plus VAT per year. The Clerk suggested it might be a better option to purchase an older vehicle outright and then servicing etc could be undertaken locally by someone of the council's choice. It was **NOTED** a good second hand vehicle could be purchased for about £10-12k. The Clerk advised that the Council used to own its own vehicle but has leased for the last 12 years. Other options were discussed such as electric vehicles and pcp type purchase.

It was agreed that the Clerk investigate the possibility of purchasing a suitable vehicle.

(g) S.137 Expenditure Limit for 2021/22

It was **NOTED** that the appropriate sum for the purpose of section 137(4)(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 (the 1972 Act) for parish and town councils in England for 2021-22 is £8.41 per elector.

129. REPORTS FROM BOROUGH & COUNTY COUNCILLORS

TMBC Borough Cllr Cooper **REPORTED** on the following items:

PLANNING

The next A3PC meeting is on 18 March at which the Panattoni application will be debated. As this meeting will have a lot of business to deal with it will start at the earlier time of 6:00pm. There is to be an online members' briefing on the Panattoni application at 5:00pm on 11th March. One representative each from Ditton and Larkfield parish councils will be invited to attend, and Robin Gilbert, the case officer, will be contacting the parish clerks with the invitations.

The application for Cobdown Lodge is still under consideration. TMBC has noted the PC's objection to the flagpole sign application by Lidl and will take your objection into consideration along with those of Larkfield PC and Mr Berriman.

Having been contacted by the residents I have lodged a report with KCC Highways asking that the road surface outside 54 Bradbourne Lane be scraped back to the level of the surrounding road and made good. A hump in the road surface causes the whole width of the road to flood when we have heavy rainfall, and, as there is no footpath, pedestrians are forced to either walk through the puddle of along the muddy verge.

LOCAL PLAN

The Planning Inspectorate has finally replied to the Council's letter of 29 January. The Inspectors have not changed their opinion regarding the Council's alleged failure in its Duty to Cooperate (DtC) with Sevenoaks District Council with regard to accepting some of Sevenoaks' unmet housing need. As the DtC is a matter that cannot be rectified during the examination process as a main modification, the Council now has the option of withdrawing the plan, or the Inspectors will write a report recommending its non-adoption because of a failure to meet the DtC. The Council will write to the Inspectors inviting them to write their final report, and this will be the prompt needed to reopen the dialogue with the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (SoS) and seek an independent review of the matter.

Depending on the decisions made by the SoS and whether an independent review is undertaken and finds in the Council's favour, the best result for the Council would be that the examination process can continue and the DtC matter is accepted. This would mean that the examinations could resume in the spring or summer and the whole process would be delayed by 6-9 months. If, however, the SoS does not authorise an independent review, or if he does and the review agrees with the Planning Inspectorate's findings, this would mean the whole Local Plan process would have to start again and include the 23% uplift in the number of houses the Borough must build. The SoS requires all Councils to have a Local Plan in place by the end of 2023. The Council's Planning department thinks this target would be achievable providing the SoS deals with the DtC problem promptly. Work is already underway to get a head start on drafting a new Local Plan should that be the outcome. Applications already approved under the existing emerging Local Plan would stand, but Area 3 in particular would be required to build even more houses than is the current case. This is because the north of the Borough doesn't have any Green Belt, or much in the way of AONBs or SSSIs. A new local plan would run for 15 years from the expected date of adoption, so 2023 – 2038.

Because the Council does not have a 5-year housing supply identified – it is currently about 2.9 years – it is likely there will be many more speculative applications to build being submitted by developers banking on the presumption to approve in these circumstances. Do not be surprised, therefore, if more major developments are applied for in our area.

K SPORTS

Councillors may have noticed that Amazon continues to use the K Sports car park albeit on a much-reduced basis. The contract was scheduled to expire at the end of January, but given the current lockdown the K Sports management decided to offer an extended contract in order to generate some income and continue to provide employment until the gym and playing field facilities can be used once more.

COVID

The vaccination programme is being rolled out at an amazing speed with about 1/3 of the UK's adult population having now received at least one jab. New cases of Covid, hospital admissions and Covid deaths are all falling and I'm sure you've all seen the government's roadmap back to some semblance of normality.

In addition to the asymptomatic testing centre at Larkfield library, a second one has now opened at the Angel Centre in Tonbridge. The Angel Centre is also the site for one of Kent's large vaccination centres. Bookings must be made online, and people aged 56 and above may now apply for their vaccination.

LOCAL POLITICS

Local elections in England will take place on 6th May. Measures will be put in place to ensure that polling stations and the counts can be made Covid-secure. Here in Ditton we will be voting for a new KCC Councillor who will replace Peter Homewood, and for a Police & Crime Commissioner. Matthew Scott is standing for re-election in this post. There will doubtless be candidates from all the major

political parties for these positions. You may be interested to know that Tom Cannon will be standing as a KCC candidate for Maidstone Central division, and also for Bridge ward in the Maidstone Borough Council election.

The Local Government Boundary Commission will be carrying out a review of the Borough Council's ward boundaries, and we are currently at the stage where the various political groups are putting together their proposals for the number of councillors the Council has. These proposals have to demonstrate that the Council will have sufficient councillors to enable it to carry out its statutory duties. There are currently 54 TMBC Councillors. Once the LGBC accepts a number, work will then begin to decide where to draw the boundary lines, and there are a number of rules that have to be followed to ensure each councillor represents a similar number of electors and the ward boundaries meet certain geographic requirements. The review will make no difference to parliamentary constituency or parish boundaries, although the Boundary Commission will be starting a review of parliamentary constituencies later this year.

Just a reminder that census day is on Sunday March 21st. The census will be carried out primarily online, but paper returns are available for those that wish them. Everyone should receive a leaflet through the post giving their address's unique identifier for completion of the census. Citizens Advice is running a helpline to talk people through completing the census.

Tracey Crouch has finally finished the chemo and radiotherapy treatments for breast cancer, and as can be seen from recent photographs her hair is now growing back.

130. REPORTS FROM NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICE & KCC WARDEN TEAM

A written **REPORT** from KCC Warden Sue Absolon which had previously been **CIRCULATED** was **READ** and **NOTED**:

Welfare

Continuing to support our residents both by phone and with doorstep visits due to covid restrictions and wanting to keep our residents as safe as possible.

Supporting residents with physical and mental health.

Referring residents to relevant agencies for further help and support and supporting onwards.

Where possible I am giving visual presence in the area, so that residents are able to see me and speak with me.

Deliver food parcels and prescriptions for those that need them.

Talking to people and groups of people regarding the importance of social distancing and the lockdown rules.

Helping residents with housing issues

Working with partnership agencies to ensure the safety of and to help meet needs of our residents.

Reporting suspicious or anti social behaviour to police.

Environment

Reported dead animal to TMBC

Reported waste in woodlands parade to TMBC

Liaised with resident to have bush cleared from obstructing pathway.

Book Exchange

Sadly the book exchange remains closed because of COVID restrictions.

Thank you

Thank you for letting me continue to use your facilities, as always I am very appreciative. Please all stay safe and I look forward to seeing you all again when we are able. If you need to contact me please feel free to do so.

A brief written **REPORT** via email from PCSO Amy Sears which had previously been **CIRCULATED** was **READ** and **NOTED**:

There is nothing major to report but we are doing high visibility patrolling when the schools are open from Monday. This will be putting a visible presence in the area to ensure that Covid is adhered to as much as possible. I am continuing to patrol the area of Ditton and dealing with any issues we have. There has been many reports this weekend regarding nuisance vehicles in the Quarry which I will be keeping an eye on. Also reports of youths which again I am monitoring.

131. DATE SENSITIVE PLANNING MATTERS

(a) Plans Received for Comment

TM/21/00415/FL Proposed annexe in rear garden 456 London Road

RESOLVED this Council objects to this application as it would not want to see a separate dwelling at this location. More information is needed for the intended use of this annexe.

TM/21/00424/FL Two storey rear extension 34 Oak Drive

RESOLVED NO OBJECTION

TM/21/00425/FL Two storey rear extension to replace existing single 36 Oak Drive

storey extension

RESOLVED NO OBJECTION

(b) Plans dealt with under delegated power

The following applications previously dealt with under delegated power were **READ** and **NOTED:-**

TM/20//02957/FL Loft conversion with front and rear dormers 27 Blackthorn Dr

NO OBJECTION

TM/20/00207/FL Demolish single storey at rear together with 571 London Rd

Conservatory, construct single storey extension

to rear

NO OBJECTION

TM/21/00215/TPOC Rear garden Sycamore trees A and B and Birch C 47 The Stream

- crown and lift and reduce by approx.. 30-40%, Hazel D – reduce in height and width 30-40%. Front Garden – Sycamores E and F – crown lift and reduce By approx.. 30-40% (trees are overgrown and causing

Damage to property).

NO OBJECTION SUBJECT TO TMBC TREE OFFICER APPROVAL

TM/21/00205/FL Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of 2 x 1

Cobdown Lodge 540 London Road

bedroom flats and 4 x 2 bedroom flats within new residential building. Creation of 8 parking spaces, cycle parking and refuse storage areas. Associated and

soft landscaping.

RESOLVED This Council STRONGLY OBJECTS to this application on the same grounds it objected to the previous application [TM/19/02900/FL] at this location:-

- 1. Impact of more traffic on the A20 which is already at capacity and gets gridlocked on regular basis KCC have put a holding objection on another development in the area until the traffic improvements are made to the A20 so to allow this development would go against this. Also, to allow the access route to be from the A20 will cause terrible problems as it is dangerously close to the traffic lights at Ditton Corner already a traffic hotspot. It would be very dangerous for cars entering/exiting the site crossing the path of the traffic so close to the junction. There is also concern about how large delivery lorries or the waste refuse lorry would be able to enter/exit the site safely. There is insufficient parking allowed for the proposed amount of dwellings one per dwelling plus three for visitors would not be sufficient as most households now have at least two vehicles.
- 2. Pollution Ditton Corner has already been designated as an AQMA and to allow more traffic in this area would have a negative impact on the already poor air quality in this part of the village.
- 3. To allow the demolition of this old and historic property and to allow the erection of a tall modern building will have a great detrimental effect on this very special area. The area was referred to in the TMBC Medway Gap Character Area Supplementary Planning Document, adopted in February 2012, as "An Area of Landscape Significance" with panoramic views of the North Downs and short views of Cobdown Farm Conservation area (we have attached the relevant pages from this document for your information). To allow this development would destroy the views and history and the proposed development is not at all in keeping with the old Ragstone Wall and Victorian properties opposite. Also in a previous planning application at this property (TM/19/01053/FL) one of the conditions stated by TMBC was " 2. All materials used externally shall match those of the existing building.

Reason: To ensure that the development does not harm the character and appearance of the existing building or visual amenity of the locality as the dwelling is situated in a prominant position along the A20"

To allow this development would be going against previous conditions set for development at this property.

4. The Parish Council received many copies of objections from local residents to the previous application at this site who were also concerned about the impact of traffic, pollution and historic views. And in particular one resident whose family has a long history with the property and would like to see it listed, not destroyed.

TM/20/00283/AT

Lidl flagpole sign 1 x 6m; 1 x Lidl store fascia sign (canopy mounted); 1 x Lidl buddle sign (wall mounted), 3 x large wall mounted billboard; 1 x free standing poster display unit

RESOLVED this Council objects to this application as the large illuminated flagpole and illuminated sign would be out of keeping and obtrusive to the area and could cause a distraction to motorists and light pollution to nearby properties. Previous applications for large flagpoles at this location have been refused.

TM/21/00225/TPOC Group of 7 sycamores (T1) to reduce from approx.. 19 Ditton PI

50ft to approx.. 25ft.

NO OBJECTION SUBJECT TO TMBC TREE OFFICER APPROVAL

TM/21/00250/FL Erection of single storey porch 3 Franklin Kidd Ln

NO OBJECTION

TM/21/00300/FL Erection of 11 x poly tunnels each measuring up to

52m long x 9.6m wide x 7.3m tall along with assoc. Mast 571238

Land West of

Hermitage Quarry

FMR

Rainwater storage tank

NO OBJECTION

KCC/TM/0289/2020 Section 73 application to vary conditions 9 & 10 of

Annex A2 of planning permission TM/10/2029 (as amended by planning permission TM/17/131) to amend the number and timing of HGV movements associated

with ongoing operations

NO COMMENT

TM/10/2029/A2/R26B Prior approval for an amendment to the external Hermitage Quarry

Appearance of the as-built transport workshop (approved Under planning references TM/10/2029/VARB0, and together with the installation of an air source heat pump system, associated equipment and enclosure and a refuse store pursuant to condition 26 of Annex 2 of

planning permission TM/10/2029

NO COMMENT

(c) Decisions from TMBC Area 3

The following plans, dealt with by Area 3 were READ and NOTED:-

TM/20/02623/TPOC T1 Ash to reduce by 25%; T2 Ash to reduce 84 Acorn Grove

by 30% in height T3 Lawson Cypress to reduce by 50%

TM/20/02687/FL Construction of a single storey extension comprising of 12 New Road

typical block and brick with a flat roof with a lantern

APPROVED on 27 JANUARY 2021

APPROVED on 14 JANUARY 2021

TM/20/02618/FL Single storey side and rear extensions 19 Cobdown CI

APPROVED on 2 FEBRUARY 2021

TM/20/02884/FL Demolition of existing single storey rear extension 183 Woodlands Rd

APPROVED on 2 FEBRUARY 2021

TM/20/02227/RD Details of condition 16 (service delivery plan), 21 675 London Rd

(site investigation) and 22a (fuel storage) submitted Pursuant to planning permission TM/19/02841/FL (Demolition of existing buildings and erection of Class A1 Foodstore with associated parking, landscaping and access works and installation of

pedestrian crossing on London Road)

APPROVED ON 19 FEBRUARY 2021

TM/20//02957/FL Loft conversion with front and rear dormers 27 Blackthorn Dr

APPROVED ON 19 FEBRUARY 2021

(d) Ditton Edge

It was **NOTED** that the TMBC website still showed decision pending and there was nothing new added. Cllr Rook said that input was needed in trying to reduce the housing density and the council may need help to achieve this.

(e) Aylesford Newsprint

It was **NOTED** that the TMBC website still showed decision pending. The clerk advised that there was a new communication from KCC Highways added on 5th March which addressed some of the issues about access and paths etc. The Clerk will forward this to Cllr Mulcuck. Cllr Mulcuck said that it was hoped a meeting could be arranged in the near future with Panattoni to discuss the development and suggestions made by the local parish councils.

(f) TMBC Local Plan

Borough Cllr Coopers update on the Local Plan was NOTED.

(g) Regular Joint Parish Meetings – [notes of meeting held on 02.02.21 - emailed 09.02.2021]

The notes of the meeting held on 2nd February which had previously been **CIRCULATED**, were **READ** and **NOTED**. Cllr Mulcuck advised that a further meeting had taken place on 2nd March and the minutes would be **CIRCULATED** in due course. It was acknowledged that these meetings were useful to discuss a joint approach to planning issues affecting all the local villages.

(h) Resident request for signage at The Stream

A response from KCC was **READ** and it was **NOTED** that because there were no accident statistics for this location they would not provide additional signage but that the parish council could pay for signs if it wished to do so. It was acknowledged that the increased pedestrian use of this area may reduce when lockdown ends.

132. **REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS**

A copy of the Parish Council's current Standing Orders together with the updated revised Standing Orders [based on the latest NALC model (2018 revised 2020)] which had previously been **CIRCULATED** were **READ**.

RESOLVED to **ACCEPT** and **APPROVE** the revised version as the Standing Orders for Ditton Parish Council.

133. ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

It was **NOTED** that the Annual Parish Meeting [with public attendance] should take place this year by 1st June 2021. It was further **NOTED** that it could be online if held before 6th May. It was agreed that an in person meeting would be preferable. It was also suggested that the Annual Parish Council Meeting could be held on the same night. Two possible dates – 17th May and 24th May were noted. It was also suggested that it would be sensible not to give certificates or invite volunteers who the Council wished to thank to a meeting in May but to wait to hold an event later in the year when restrictions are hopefully lifted.

RESOLVED to hold the Annual Parish Meeting and the Annual Parish Council Meeting [socially distanced to comply with current guidance] on the same evening in May – date to be confirmed.

134. FUTURE MEETINGS

It was agreed that the next Full Council meeting would probably have to be on Zoom again [probably on 12th April] but hopefully meetings could return in person after May. Committee Meetings will return as they are felt necessary.

135. **EXTENSION TO FOOTBALL SEASON**

It was **NOTED** that all the clubs that play their matches on the Council's pitches have asked if the season could be extended to June to accommodate the remaining matches once they can commence playing.

RESOLVED to agree to extend the football season until June.

136. **ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POINTS**

Information regarding the proposed location of the charging points [between the bins and disabled bays] and the draft licence agreement, which had previously been **CIRCULATED** was **READ**. It was **NOTED** that the Council will receive 30% of the net profit from the charging points and that the Council would be responsible for invoicing the provider for the electricity that the charging points used. It was **NOTED** that KCC were responsible for the maintenance/repair of the charging points.

RESOLVED to **APPROVE** the licence agreement with KCC and that it be signed and sealed as required.

137. MATTERS ARISING FROM "CORRESPONDENCE FOR NOTING"

There were no matters arising.

Pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and Standing Orders 27 & 50 the Chairman to move that due to the confidential nature of the next item the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting.

138. **DITTON COURT QUARRY**

(a) New Lease with Tarmac

It was **NOTED** that all members had **APPROVED** the lease with Tarmac and agreed that it be signed and sealed with the parish seal.

139. **STAFF MATTERS – ANNUAL LEAVE**

It was **NOTED** that some members of staff that had been on furlough [bar, caretaking and admin] had continued to accrue holiday and that they would have several weeks outstanding at the end of March. It was further **NOTED** that there were three members of staff [the Clerk, Business Administrator and Caretaking Supervisor] that had worked throughout the pandemic and had not been able to take much annual leave.

RESOLVED the staff members on furlough be paid part holiday for March and part furlough and the balance of their holiday pay be paid to them at the end of March and that for the staff that had not been able to take holiday because they had worked through the pandemic, they be allowed to carry over up to two weeks holiday and be paid for the balance of holiday owing to them at the end of March.

140. **CLOSURE**

The meeting closed at 8.11pm.

Chairman 12th April 2021