Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 27th June 2024 at Shorne Village Hall

PRESENT Mr R Lane (Chairman)
Mr R Theobald
Ms P Clifton
Ms S Lindley
Mr C Rea
Mrs L Williams
Mr T Rochard-Pullen
Mrs D Salmon (Clerk)

APOLOGIES Mr J Bugg
Mr R Hardy

IN ATTENDANCE None

19 To receive any declarations of interest for any items on the agenda

None received.

20 To approve the minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 9th May 2024

The minutes were approved as a true record.

21 Any items raised by Parishioners in attendance (at Chairman's discretion)

None in attendance.

22 Finance Report

The finance report and a copy of the account balances were circulated with the agenda and are set out below:

29/04/2024	B/Fwd Reconciled Bank Balance			**£16,673.78**
Date	**Supplier**	**Net**	**VAT**	**Total**
RECEIPTS				
30/04/2024	CCLA Dividend	£990.36	£0.00	£990.36
07/05/2024	HMRC VAT Refund	£0.00	£464.15	£464.15
	Total Receipts for May			**£1,454.51**
PAYMENTS				
09/05/2024	Gozzett Tree Surgery - Crabbles Bottom First Cut	£715.00	£143.00	£858.00
24/05/2024	Topsource Worldwide – Payroll Processing	£21.87	£4.37	£26.24
24/05/2024	M Fielder-White – Internal Auditor	£90.00	£0.00	£90.00
24/05/2024	One.com – Email Domain Hosting	£239.35	£47.87	£287.22
24/05/2024	Pensdown Electrical – Bus Shelter Solar Lighting	£3,098.00	£619.60	£3,717.60
28/05/2024	Zurich Insurance – Annual Policy	£636.67	£0.00	£636.67

28/05/2024	Staff Salary	£988.65	£0.00	£988.65
28/05/2024	Clerk Allowances	£51.00	£0.00	£51.00
28/05/2024	Air Landline	£9.99	£2.00	£11.99
	Total Payments for May	**£5,850.53**	**£816.84**	**£6,667.37**
30/05/2024	C/fwd Reconciled Bank Balance			**£11,460.92**

The payments and receipts were noted and approved.

23 Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR)

23.1 To review the internal auditor's report and recommended actions

Mrs Salmon has previously circulated the internal auditor's report. The internal auditor was satisfied that the Council is run in accordance with current Financial Regulations and Standing Orders, that there is transparency in the operating of the finances, and that all governance objectives have been met. The internal auditor noted that we had reduced the precept for 2024/2025 and that we plan to close some bank accounts and transfer reserves to long-term investments, but that we need to increase planned expenditure in order to reduce the reserves

Mr Lane said that this is a very pleasing result, in stark contrast to the internal audit report last year, and is a reflection of the work we have carried out over the past year to address the previous shortcomings. Mr Lane conveyed his thanks to Mrs Salmon for her work in achieving this very satisfactory result.

Mr Lane reminded members that we agreed at the meeting on 23rd November 2023 that it is incumbent on all Members to identify specific expenditure to the cost of £14,500 during this financial year and this emphasises the need to do this. It also highlights the need to transfer the Crabbles Bottom bank balance and the money set aside for asset renewals into a long term investment.

23.2 To review and approve the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1)

Members reviewed the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1). It was noted that all governance objectives had been met. This was **approved**, and the Annual Governance Statement was signed by Mr Lane and Mrs Salmon.

23.3 To review and approve the Accounting Statements (Section 2)

Members reviewed The Accounting Statements (Section 2). The figures included have previously been agreed by The Clerk and the Internal Auditor. It was noted that the 2022/23 accounts have been restated to correct the value of fixed assets. The Accounting Statements were **approved**, and were duly signed by Mrs Salmon and Mr Lane.

24 To confirm the validity of Members' Declarations of Pecuniary Interests (DPIs)

Mrs Salmon reported that the Monitoring Officer has requested that Parish Councillors review their declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests on an annual basis. Councillors must update their register of interests within 28 days from when they become aware of any new interest or any change to one already registered. All members confirmed that the Disclosable Pecuniary Interest previously completed remain unchanged. Mrs Salmon to contact Mr Bugg and Mr Hardy to confirm via email.

25 To review an interim report from the Planning & Highways Committee

Mrs Lindley reported that there are ongoing applications and appeals but she will provide full details at the Planning & Highways Committee Meeting on 11th July.

On 19th June, Mrs Lindley and Mr Lane met with Michelle Morris of KCC for a site meeting at the A226/Forge Lane/Green Lane junction. Mrs Lindley and Mr Lane raised the concerns of the parish. A resident interrupted the meeting to express her personal opinions, but refused to give her name or address. Unfortunately, this uninvited intrusion disrupted the meeting leaving Mrs Lindley and Mr Lane limited time to discuss the junction with KCC on behalf of the parish and petitioners.

Members discussed a number of possible options for reducing the frequency or severity of accidents. The Parish Council will continue to work with KCC on this matter.

26 To review an interim report from the Footpaths, Land & Properties Committee

26.1 Section 154 Notice at Bowesden Lane – Ms Clifton reported that the notice has now been cancelled and the cutting back will be carried out by KCC. The situation at Malthouse Lane was also discussed, where a KCC officer had previously reported that vegetation clearance had been delayed "by a change in land ownership". Nevertheless, another KCC officer has since advised that arrangements will be made to carry out the work.

26.2 LTC Fund letter of agreement for Crabbles Bottom – Ms Clifton circulated the draft agreement in advance of the meeting. Members discussed the draft agreement and would like the addition of *'management will remain under the direction of the Parish Council'*. Ms Clifton will arrange for the amended letter to be recirculated to members. It was **agreed** that unless any further comments were received following recirculation, Mr Lane is authorised to sign the document as Chairman on behalf of Shorne Parish Council.

- Ms Clifton reported that since the last Footpaths, Land & Properties Committee Meeting, she has sent the application for tree work in a conservation area to Gravesham Borough Council for works to be carried out at Shorne Common Rough.

27 To receive any report from Borough Councillor(s)

No report received.

28 To receive any report from County Councillor

No report received.

Mrs Salmon had previously circulated an email received from Bryan Sweetland inviting members to a tour of Kent County Council offices on Friday 19th July. A number of members are not available on that day so Mrs Salmon to reply asking for other possible dates.

29 Correspondence requiring action (to be circulated before the meeting)

(a) A further three emails were received from the same parishioner mentioned at the previous meeting regarding a range of issues in Bowesden Lane, including a wall being built on the verge. Members discussed the parishioner's concerns. Mrs Lindley is going to visit Bowesden Lane to gain a deeper understanding. Mrs Lindley has already researched the boundaries and verges in that area but ownership is not clear.

30 General matters raised by Members for discussion

- Mrs Lindley asked if any further information had been received regarding a confirmed date of the civic service. Ms Clifton had spoken to Ted Hurst, Vicar, who advised that a date had still not been set.
- Ms Clifton reported that parties involved have been asked to vote on the new name of the National Nature Reserve (NNR) project. The final options proposed are:
    - Kent Woods and Downs
    - Kent Downs and Woods
    - North Kent Woods and Downs

  Members expressed their preference for North Kent Woods and Downs. Ms Clifton will submit the vote on behalf of Shorne Parish Council.
- Mrs Williams raised concerns regarding the intimidating behaviour of the occupant of a property adjacent to the N167/Thong Lane junction. On more than one occasion, the occupant has been verbally abusive to people using the public footpath alongside the occupant's property, and she also objects to volunteers carrying out Speedwatch activities outside her property, even making threats to the volunteers. PC Joanne Hammond has been made aware. Ms Clifton will speak with John Pelham of KCC regarding land ownership and the resident's intimidating behaviour towards users of a public right of way. This situation will continue to be monitored.

31 Matters to be discussed in private under item 13 of Standing Orders

None.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.31pm.

Signed Mr Lane:…….. Dated:……..