

SALTWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 6th March 2023 at 6.30 pm at Saltwood C/E School

Present : Cllrs Boland (in the Chair), Matthews, Carter, Sadler & Curran

In attendance : Mr. G Eaton, Clerk to the Council, KCC Cllr Love, FHDC Cllr Treloar, Cllr Horner, Stanford PC, and two members of the public

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from FHDC Cllrs Whybrow & Martin

2 Registering declarations of interest in items on the Agenda

Cllr Matthews declared an interest in planning application 23/0220

Cllr Curran declared an interest in planning application 23/0159

There were no other declarations of interests in items on the Agenda

3 Minutes of the last Meeting

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 6th February 2023 were unanimously approved

4 Matters arising

Cllr Curran gave a brief update on the purchase of the Cherry Trees and would circulate an email with full details

Cllr Boland updated on his recent meeting with the Hon Treasurer of Saltwood Church and the donation of £250 towards the upkeep of the burial ground was confirmed

Cllr Boland reported that he had left details of the forthcoming Parish Council elections at the local Schools to make parents aware

5 Reports

KCC Cllr Love noted that some of the pot holes in School Road had been repaired and others would be reported. Rory also spoke about the KCC budget challenges and the high need education fund

FHDC Cllr Treloar spoke about FHDC's budget setting and a recent briefing she had attended on the Otterpool development

FHDC Cllr Whybrow's emailed report was noted with thanks

6 Finance

a/ To receive bank balances

The Clerk reported the bank balances as at 28th February 2023 -

Community (current) account	£10947
Business Manager (savings) account	£12511

The balances were approved

b/ To approve invoices presented for payment

The following invoices were approved for payment –

G Eaton, Clerk's salary/expenses (Feb 2023)	£265.50
PCC of Saltwood, donation to upkeep of burial ground	£250.00
Saltwood C/E School, hall hire (March & April)	£50.00
Safeplay, playpark inspection	£58.20
Castle Water, fountain	£39.20

c/ Annual review of Clerk's salary

The Clerk's request to have his hourly rate of pay increased by 7.50% (£12.95 to £13.95) was unanimously approved. The Clerk thanked the Cllrs

7 Adjournment of Meeting for Public Inclusion

The members of the public outlined their opposition to planning application 23/0159

8 Planning & Enforcement

New Planning applications

23/0220 - Reduce the crowns of two Yew trees (T1 and T2) by 3m in height and 2m off lateral limbs, situated in a conservation area

Saltwood Village Hall, Rectory Lane, CT21 4PZ

There were no objections to this application

23/0159 – proposed replacement dwelling (involving the demolition of the existing fire damaged property) plus two additional dwellings to the rear of the site and associated external works

High Meadow, Sandling Road, CT21 4QJ

The Parish Council recommends that this application is refused for the following reasons :

The application rolls, in our view unreasonably, two elements (which ought to be separate) into one.

One element is the application for rebuilding of the family home destroyed by fire in November 2020. The Parish Council has no objection to that part of the application.

However, the Parish Council does object to the second part of the application – that two new houses should be built in the garden of High Meadow.

The plot of land to be used for building these two houses, which is within the AONB boundary, is much higher than that of the neighbouring bungalows to the south. There is already substantial disquiet among neighbouring residents should the two new two storey dwellings be granted planning permission since these proposed new builds would overlook the neighbouring properties and severely decrease the amenity and privacy currently enjoyed by those residents.

As already stated, the plot of land is within the AONB boundary. The Kent AONB Planning and Management Plan policy SD1 states that the need to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Kent Downs AONB is the prime purpose of the designation and is to have the highest level of protection in Development Control decisions. Policy SD3 states that new development or changes to land use will be opposed if they run counter to or disregard the primary purpose of Kent AONB. The Parish Council considers the addition of the new houses to the site fails to conserve or enhance the natural beauty.

KCC Highways has also expressed concern regarding the use of the vehicle entrance and exit for the new builds (Darke lane). For the safety of vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians (St. Augustine's primary school and Brockhill Park college students use and cross this bridle path twice daily) KCC Highways require the minimum dimensions regarded as necessary distances for visibility splays as 2.4m and 43m. This application does not demonstrate how this can be achieved. The widening of the entrance to 4.8m is also necessary – however to achieve the widening of one of Saltwood's ancient bridle paths would require the correct permissions. If the reason for such a change would be to allow the construction of new buildings within an AONB that would not be following the 'conserve and enhance' condition

23/0036 -display and erection of a non-illuminated business signage. Two signs to be arranged in triangular formation

Hillhurst Farm, Stone Street, Westenhanger, CT21 4HU

There were no objections to this application

9 Otterpool Park update

There was a general discussion with Cllr Horner, Stanford PC about the proposed Otterpool development and rumors that FHDC was considering selling off the entire site to a private

developer/s. It was agreed that Saltwood PC would sign the proposed letter to FHDC from a number of concerned local Parish Councils (subject to some minor amendments to the letter)

10 Environment Agency's proposed tree works at Mill Leese Wood

Cllr Boland reported that he had appealed the decision of the ICO to dismiss the complaint

11 Playpark

There was nil of note to report

12 Correspondence

Email from FHDC – residents urged to not let recycling go to waste

Email from KCC – community services consultation

13 Any Other Business

There was a general discussion about the May Parish Council elections and it was agreed that new Cllrs should be given a welcome pack of key documents

Clerk

14 Date of next Meetings

It was agreed that the next Parish Council Meetings would be held on 3rd April and 15th May 2023 at 6.30 pm at Saltwood C/E School

There being no other business the Meeting closed at 8.10 pm