

**A meeting of the Seal Parish Council was held on THURSDAY 14<sup>th</sup> April 2022 in Seal Pavilion on Seal Recreation Ground at 7.30pm**

**Present:**

**Mr Boorman**

**Mr Michaelides**

**Mr Martin**

**Mr Haslam**

**Mrs Talbot**

**Mrs Weston**

**Mr Bourne**

**Mr Bulleid**

**Also present: Councillor Thornton, Councillor Gough and the Clerk**

**There were 10 minutes parishioner's question time.**

The Group Chairman, Will Morrish and Nick Roberts from the Sevenoaks Scouts Estates Team updated the Council on the position with Childsbridge Lane Barn. They are discussing the Heads of Terms with Tarmac for the area including land and barn for scouting activities. They will require to submit a planning application and once this is agreed it could take up to 2 years. The barn would be the new headquarters for Seal and used for storage for the rest of the District. There will be a climbing wall in there providing good opportunity for scouting activities for the wider District; the facilities will be available to community groups to generate an income but not beyond that as a commercial activity. There are 10 scout groups in the district and Seal is currently operating from Bat and Ball. It would be a 99-year lease, on a peppercorn rent, to extend a virtual freehold. It is thought that a small car park for pick up and drop off for parents and leaders with 10-12 spaces would be sufficient. The building would be 4000sq ft and would create a first floor with 2 and half storeys high. Scouts are willing to discuss the next stages with the Parish Council. Subject to planning permission, the Parish Council continues to welcome the opportunity this gives to the Scouts.

Another parishioner attended the meeting to discuss the development on the Quarry Site, and whether there would be charges to the car park or would it be free. Also discussed amenities and whether they would be stretched and the noise and road issues it would cause to the main access.

**1 To receive and accept apologies:**

Apologies received for absence

Mr Penn – Medical Reason and Mr Spencer – work commitments

**2 The minutes of the last meeting were amended to include “Stone Street Road” and agreed to be signed at the next meeting.**

**3 Declarations of Interest - None**

**4 Clerk's report**

The Clerk had received email correspondence on Tuesday 12 April regarding a public inspection which had expired on 14 March 2022 for St Julians Road, Underriver, Waiting Restrictions and Street parking places, experimental order 2021. Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 which has now closed.

The matter was discussed and it was agreed that the Chairman would respond. The view was that the new arrangements were overall safer for walkers as visibility is better with less parking, it would be useful to have signs on the Knole Park fence as the yellow lines get covered in leaves at times of the year and a request will be made to include yellow lines

being added either side of where the Greensand Way crosses St Julians Way as that will improve the safety of the well-used path. The Chairman would also write to the National Trust requesting that the booking system for parking arrangements in Knole Park set up during Covid are removed as this provides a good alternative for parking during busy times but is not operating effectively at present.

#### **5 KCC Matters – Councillor Gough’s – See Note attached from last meeting**

- KCC’s survey of two bridges on Mill Lane by Tumbling Bay, requires replacement of small slab extension on both sides of Tumbling Bay West, and on north side of Tumbling Bay East.
- A25: The SID column. – This has been discussed in the past and the parish council is looking for a stainless-steel bracket with 2 clamps and post for a mobile Speed indicator sign to be placed there. Whitney Gwillim required data which was sent over and Councillor Gough will ask Toby Butler to contact the clerk.
- Bank Lane is made narrower on the bend at Riverdale Farm by deep accumulated debris at the side the road and by potholes, creating a hazard. Simon Hawkins inspected Bank Lane just east of the farm and noted verge erosion and small potholes to be filled and will take up issues there.
- Copse Bank footpath/Ashplatt Footpath is covered with leaf mulch and is treacherous could KCC consider general maintenance annually. There is a new PROW officer and Councillor Gough will look into it further. Due to the time of year, it isn’t a problem now but will be Autumn time. It is a footpath not vehicle access and will require fencing to be looked at as some are leaning into the footpath.
- Zion Street/Church Road – It is important to resurface, and extensive patching will be completed. There is a £7m pothole blitz this year.
- HGV’s volume of traffic using A25, solutions to weight and width restrictions, dangerous to pedestrians, elderly and children in relation to air quality requires monitoring. Councillor Gough wasn’t sure on the solution as it is an ongoing problem which is being looked at again. Councillor Thornton said the J5 slips would be good.
- Childsbridge Lane is under consultation until 12 May. Design speed signs are underway, and this is combined with the consultation, it depends whether there are any objections and whether we need to go to the Joint Transportation Board.
- The Bridge is still under audit regarding the hatching out on the bridge. The dragon teeth on the Childsbridge Lane are under the Assets Management Team.
- Blackhall Lane Closure Streetworks Coordinator had mixed messages and there was a mix up with Network Power and nothing happened whilst the road was closed. Councillor Gough mentioned that the Bus Consultation had £2m subsidise bus budget. KCC are in a very difficult position and had budget pressures. The Bus Service Improvement plan was in last October. KCC had to set the budget. £35m a part of BSIP over the years, two thirds capital and can’t use to subsidiaries as they are cutting services. They cannot stop operators stopping services. But can use it for new routes in the year. Consultation runs another week.

Ukraine Refugee Schemes, 2000 Ukraine are matched with 800 properties across Kent. Hugh project and programme and admin and work with District. Delivering some good outcomes. Operation Brock, huge effect on the Council. Brock Zero (is Operation Brock) loads of traffic on A20. Brock Zero is coming to an end and becomes a bit

more mobile. KCC are working hard. It is a national problem and horrible problem for Kent and people's quality of life.

## **6 Other Matters Requiring Discussion and Action**

### **6.1 Sevenoaks Scouts**

A discussion on plans for the barn on Childsbridge Lane. The parish council discussed the Scouts barn and noted that Kemsing are strongly struggling to raise money for their building. The district would use the climbing wall. The Parish Council would ask that it is used for community use only with the car park for that use.

### **6.2 Highway Improvement Plan**

The HIP is ready for KCC, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> items are going through consultation, Kemsing has to go to Joint Transportation Board. This won't make any difference to the speed. The draft consultation letter for Zion Street has now been received from KCC and the Parish Council will propose at the next parish council meeting.

HIP change 3 minor changes TRO -8<sup>th</sup> April, A25 traffic calming measures and Childsbridge Lane. Mirror position at this stage we don't need to identify where the sign will be as the HIP may require an amendment and agree it at a later stage.

### **6.3 Seal Village Memorial Tree**

The Parish Council requires to know the type of tree planned for the forecourt area and size to draft an agreement for maintenance. KYN kindly informed the clerk that the tree would be an Amelanchier, 200-250 cm, which they are working on getting a work party to build the planter, and really hope to have it for the Jubilee weekend if possible.

The Parish Council agreed for a letter to all parties KYN and the Dentist to be drafted to maintain the tree in forecourt area. This was proposed by Mr Haslam and seconded by Mr Bourne and agreed unanimously.

**ACTION: JS/clerk**

### **6.4 Seal Pavilion**

The Parish Council to consider the drop outside the enclosed area of the Pavilion to decide whether the area requires to be surfaced or fenced. Mr Boorman has looked into the area and damp course of the building and noted that surrounding the building pea shingle is placed around it. The front door is above damp course and Mr Boorman will follow up with some quotes for pea shingle and will ask the preschool if they would be happy to have pea shingle in the drop. If not, a grill could be put over the gap.

**ACTION: OB**

### **6.5 Memorial Garden**

The parish council proposed at the last meeting to order a memorial bench, unfortunately the price of the bench has increased to £1,843.75 and will require approval from the Council. Mr Tavare had provided a revised quote for the lectern of £1,039.80. It was felt that the site currently was very much "work in progress" and it would be preferable to put up the sign and bench once it is looking finished and good. Mrs Weston would speak to Mr Tavare to get an update on progress which would be reported back at the next meeting. If new planting is proposed it would be good to see this and if ongoing costs are involved.

**ACTION: FW**

### **6.6 Seal Recreation Ground**

Kent Fire Brigade reported an incident in Seal Recreation Ground on 24<sup>th</sup> March, involving criminal damage to council's property and the incident is being investigated by the Police.

Kent Fire Brigade had asked whether we would look at access keys for the gate in an emergency and due to the security of the gate and its hirers the parish council would have its own security measures and the clerk suggested that another key holder would be required in case of an emergency.

The Clerk mentioned the cost totalling £1,622 of damage caused by the fire, which will be claimed on the insurance. This was proposed by Mr Michaelides and seconded by Mr Haslam and agreed unanimously. The Parish Council will decide to replace the bench in due course. It was also suggested to contact SDC regarding flammability of the product which caught alight so easily.

**ACTION: Clerk**

#### **6.7 Councillor Vacancy**

The Parish Council is actively seeking new Councillors. An interest in the local community is the main qualification but we are particularly looking for legal skills due to our current councillor with these moving out of the Parish. If you would like to become a Parish Councillor or are interested in our work, please contact the Clerk on 01732 833360 or [sealparishc@outlook.com](mailto:sealparishc@outlook.com).

#### **6.8 Donations**

a) KSS Air Ambulance Charity are seeking a grant of £300 towards their mission of saving lives and ensuring the best possible outcomes for patients. This was proposed by Mr Bourne and seconded by Mr Boorman and agreed unanimously.

b) Seal Know your Neighbours are seeking financial assistance for the Queens Platinum Jubilee. Mr Haslam proposed to pay £1,000 and seconded by Mr Michealides and agreed unanimously.

#### **6.9 St Lawrence Recreation Ground**

St Lawrence is looking to celebrate the Queens Platinum Jubilee and Mr Bourne will provide further details of expenditure costs for this celebration. Mrs Talbot proposed we pay £1,000 towards the hire of a generator and toilets for the event and this was seconded by Mr Michaelides and agreed unanimously.

**ACTION: Clerk**

#### **6.10 Air Quality Action Plan Consultation**

Mr Michaelides to discuss the zoom meeting attended with SDC on improving air quality in the Sevenoaks District between 2022 and 2027. 3 people attended the consultation which had now closed and it was mentioned the air quality on A25.

#### **6.11 KCC Bus Funding Consultation**

The Parish Council to consider responding to the public consultation on reducing the money spent on providing some bus services that private bus companies cannot afford to run, and which are no longer cost effective. Last time we considered this was 5 years ago, the Parish Council responded strongly to save the service. Mrs Weston will draft a response.

**ACTION: FW**

#### **6.12 Climate Change**

The Parish Council to discuss and agree the draft response prepared by Mr Martin to KCC's consultation on a Tree Strategy for Kent, details circulated to Councillors. Mrs Talbot approved the response and Mr Boorman seconded and this was agreed unanimously.

**ACTION: Clerk**

#### **7 Accounts and Cheques**

Cheques signed.

<b>Cheque No</b>	<b>Payee</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>VAT Reclaim</b>	<b>Description</b>
006250	Glasdon UK Limited	£6,175.08	£1,029.18	Benches
006251	Sevenoaks Volunteer Transport Group	£200.00		Donation
006252	RWE Rural Services	£450.00	£75.00	Tree removal
006253	Sevenoaks District Council	£450.30	£75.05	Dog bins and removal of bench damaged
006254	Robert Crouch	£350.00		Litter bins installed and removal of old bench
006255	Sevenoaks District Council	£32.80		Bin collection
006256	MDH Horticultural Contractors	£1,440.00	£240.00	Mowing
006257	Information Commissioner	£40.00		Data Protection fee renewal
006258	Caretaker			Salary
006259	Inland Revenue			Deductions
006260	Clerk			Salary
006261	Mrs C Boland	£63.39	10.57	Zoom and Broadband
006262	Kent County Council			Pension fund
006263	Mr Tavare	£23.00		Wildflower seeds
006264	St Lawrence (Seal) PCC	£1,000		Donation

#### Direct Debits Received to date

<b>Payment Date</b>	<b>Payee</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>VAT Reclaim</b>	<b>Description</b>
20 April 2022	British Gas	£137.88	£6.57	Seal Pavilion Electricity
22 April 2022	Npower	£258.82	£12.32	January usage Streetlighting
26 April 2022	Npower	£218.40	£10.40	February usage Streetlighting
26 April 2022	Npower	£228.27	£10.87	March usage Streetlighting

## **8 Items for Information only**

### **8.1 Annual Assembly**

Our Annual Assembly will be held 18<sup>th</sup> May 2022, please come along and support the Council at this meeting. It is the parishioner's chance to put forward ideas and raise questions. If you would like to attend, please contact the clerk.

## 8.2 Bus Shelter

SDC have acknowledged receipt for a new bus shelter suggested location 30 Childsbridge Lane and we await their response from Clear Channel. It was suggested to send a letter to a couple of residents to note that the bus shelter's location.

## 9 Planning

The Council to agree the minutes of the planning committee meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> March and 28<sup>th</sup> March and to ratify the responses to planning application consultations submitted after these meetings. This was proposed by Mr Bourne and seconded by Mr Michaelides and agreed unanimously.

A draft response for consideration for Sevenoaks Quarry planning application. The Parish Council noted that the requirements were for community use of the building, and this was proposed by Mr Bourne and seconded by Michaelides with minor amendments noted. The Parish Council gave gratitude to Mr Martin for the immense amount of time and expertise that he puts into the Parish Council's response to consultation.

### Matters for Information Only

Please see website for further information on health advice, financial advice for residents and waste and recycling services and residents who are vulnerable

<https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/info/20069142/>

KMCCG COVID-19 Vaccination

<https://www.kentandmedwayccg.nhs.uk/your-health/coronavirus/covid19vaccine>

KCC advice on Coronavirus updates <https://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/health/coronavirus>

Main source of advice for Coronavirus

[www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

A reminder to report all Highway issues direct to KCC 03000 41 81 81

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem> –

A reminder to report problems on PROW to 03000 41 7171 8am-8pm Mon-Friday.

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/waste-planning-and-land/public-rights-of-way/report-a-problem-on-a-right-of> Please report street light outages in Seal (other than on the A25) to the Parish Council.

**Meeting closed 9.45pm**

## **Note Attached – Ongoing Matters with KCC and the Parish Council**

**Due to apologies by Councillor Gough's an update was received after the last meeting, and the Parish Council noted the developments below:**

**- Cyclist are coming down Carters Hill at great speed. The Schemes Project Manager to investigate examples of signage produced by the parish council. The clerk to contact Weald PC.** I understand that Whitney Gwillim has responded to the PC already on this point as the signage requested is not of a type approved by the DfT.

**- Reduction in A25 speed limit.** We are moving to consultation. Whitney Gwillim will be sending this to our TRO co-ordinator this week

**- Update on resurfacing due to the bad condition of small roads in Seal, in particular Church Road, Pudding Lane and Zion Street.** Officers report – as stated at a previous meeting – that subject to Pothole Blitz funding this will be completed in the new financial year. As part of the budget making process (at KCC Cabinet level) we have secured funding for the pothole blitz, so hopefully we should be able to address this.

**- Childsbridge Lane Railway Bridge - white lines no room for pedestrians, particularly those with pushchairs and cyclists. Hatching by the bridge was removed some time ago Councillor Gough will update us on Traffic Orders.** – Officers have been unable to find any scheme drawings but will arrange for a safety audit based on a new design. I know that officers have concerns that an area of white hatching could give pedestrians a false sense of security, so Councillor Gough will continue to press the case.

With regard to the plan to bring down the speed limit from 60 to 40 (post Kemsing), this will as discussed be done under a TRO that would cover A25 works and the Childsbridge lane works This is also due to be handed over to the TRO co-ordinator this week (see above). Whitney is also 75% through an initial outline design for the works. No funding is required at this stage as Whitney Gwillim will cover the TRO costs in-house; however, I may well be able to contribute to some of the construction costs. That can be agreed once we know how well the proposals have been received at consultation.

**- Childsbridge Lane - speed signs, gladdon gates, KCC produced estimate for Parish Council to pursue.** Having reviewed this again Whitney Gwillim can bring the costs down somewhat and will provide an updated estimate as part of the design work.

**- Underriver House Road, work was completed by UK Power Network's last year, cabling underground,** - No update – may need to clarify with the clerk.

**- Fawke Wood Road, St Julians pot holes which have recently been filled – KCC to update.** The failing patches have been identified as defects by Kent Highways and will be renewed.

**- Reducing speed limits along country lanes.** I have followed this up and had a really valuable conversation with Rory McMullan, the officer leading on Vision Zero. Some of the evidence of the greater risk (per driver/ kilometre) on rural roads is in the Vision Zero report. We are taking a close look at an experiment in Surrey of reducing to 40mph on roads where the average speed data supports it, though there are a range of issues to be addressed related to this (effectiveness and enforcement being the main ones). We have working groups on this issue and I will follow up some of this with our senior team.

**- Bitchet Green Area, there is an area of hard standing off Rooks Hill at the Bitchet Green end which is currently barriered off, but could this be used for extra parking?** The funding is not available for the large scale works to make this useable highway. The site would need to be cleared and resurfaced and we have other higher priorities.