

A meeting of the Seal Parish Council was held on THURSDAY 14th September 2023 in Stone Village Hall at 7.30pm

Present:

Mr Michaelides

Mr Haslam (Chairman)

Mr Bourne

Mr Boorman

Mrs Talbot

Mr Bulleid

Mrs Stiasny

Mr Penn

Also present, Councillor Hogarth, Councillor Thornton, Councillor Gough and the Clerk

There was 10 minutes Parishioner time.

One resident attended the meeting to discuss parking restrictions along Zion Street, especially near the exit towards the High Street/A25. Parking along Zion Street limits emergency vehicles passing, and questioned the minimum clearance required. The Parish Council explained it is on our Highway Improvement Plan and Councillor Gough is in support. If there is an obstruction the police can manage this and the Parish Council are working with Kent Highways to find a solution to the parking.

1 Apologies: None

2 The minutes of the last meeting were amended to include an additional cheque which was agreed at the meeting and signed.

3 Declarations of Interest - None

4 Clerk's report

Simon Hawkins of Kent Highways advised the "KEEP CLEAR" markings outside of Seal House on the A25 by the library will not be refreshed as they do not meet the current specification requirements.

Godden Green Pond – KCC have confirmed that they will contribute £2,500 for dredging the pond towards the cost. CJ Gray quoted £6,000, he has apologised for the raised cost but is due to the disposal of the wet material that is the single biggest expense. The Parish Council will need to identify a source of funds if the work is to be completed in October Half Term this year.

5 KCC Matters – Councillor Gough's matters

- Godden Green Pond – PC received quote, and KCC have said that they will contribute £2,500 of the cost. Mrs Talbot mentioned that KCC have paid 100% in the past. The pond is in this condition due to silt from the road, the Parish Council do not own the pond, it is owned by Knole Estate and the silt is from Kent Highways. In the past it has been KCC's responsibility and also the Parish Council's responsibility and we ask KCC to fund the clearance as they are responsible. The Parish Council were hoping to get the work done in October half term as it is urgent and requires removal. Councillor Gough is aware that the clerk has contacted KCC for contact information for permits required. The Parish Council will ask SDC to clear the silt laying on the road around the pond to stop it washing in.
- Wildflower verges – KCC to quote for cutting wildflower verges and seeding. The Parish Council explained that Carters Hill opposite the pub, the residents response was they are not interested in wildflowers there, Catts Cottage will do their own once seeded, and Black Charles Barn happy to continue and therefore one quote for Childsbridge Lane which is opposite the Seal Village Allotments and the clerk will email Councillor Gough.

- A25 SID Column – the electricity has been disconnected, an order has been placed for the replacement pole and should be installed next week.
- Proposed reduction of Speed A25 – KCC Highways have updated us that the signs have been ordered on 29 August and this should take 90 days.

The resurfacing programme has been carried on, there are two active Kent consultations at the moment for Kent Community Service Warden deadline ending 3rd October and National Highways Deadline 28 February 2024. Kent Highways reduced the speed limit on Childsbridge Lane north of the Railway bridge to 40mph and the Parish Council are monitoring its effect on the speed of vehicles crossing the Rail Bridge, Councillor Hogarth and Mr Haslam volunteered to carry out speed watch on the speed there.

It was noted on 31 July that the speed limit and dragon teeth approaching the railway bridge is completed.

Mr Haslam raised that some of the road patching, which has been recently carried out, has not been re-lined as part of the work, and will write to KCC Highways copying Councillor Gough. He also raised about the patching in Knole, the double yellow lines has not been reinstated. Councillor Hogarth said whether the PC were attending a meeting regarding Greensand Common as part of the commons were in Seal Parish and Mr Haslam volunteered to attend. Councillor Thornton said about RAAC and SDC have looked at the estate of the building, public and properties and those building which there are areas of concern, will be looked at by a surveyor, which will include the leisure centre.

SDC have arranged an informal dropping session to discuss the implications and benefit of the route, six local cycling and walking infrastructure plan as these pass through the recreation ground which is in a conservation area and along the wibbly way footpath to Childsbridge Lane.

6 Other Matters Requiring Discussion and Action

6.1 St Lawrence Cricket Ground

The Parish Council discussed the funding, and we would contribute to fund match for the repair of £360, Mrs Talbot proposed £360 to repair the gate and this was seconded by Mr Boorman and agreed unanimously.

Mr Bourne updated the Council that the clerk has put an application into SDC, UK Shared Prosperity Fund which was successful for surfacing the car parking area. He has spoken to Francis Reed from Strutt and Parker which has given permission to surface area. Mr Bourne will have a meeting with Aaron Hill to talk about the planning application and work on DEFRA on common land which he will pursue.

6.2 Archiving

Mr Bourne proposed to digitalise 8 Parish Council minutes books for a cost of £409 and this seconded by Mrs Stiasny and agreed unanimously.

6.3 Community Ownership Fund.

The Councillors have deferred this point to the next meeting to discuss and make suggestions on schemes and projects to apply for funding.

ACTION: All

6.4 UK Shared Prosperity Fund

The Council discussed the Recreation Ground and dog exercising area and at this stage the Council were focusing on St Lawrence Ground car parking surface and grants available.

6.5 Cyber Security

Mr Haslam and Mr Penn will liaise and arrange a meeting, and we could look at Office 365 for emails.

ACTION: CH/MP

6.6 Parish Council meetings

Mr Stiasny discussed Otter, which identifies speakers at the meeting, concerns were raised previously, with recordings and the Council would require a policy. The Parish Council decided that it wasn't the best use for the production of our minutes.

6.7 Underriver Noticeboard

Mrs Talbot advised the Council that a generous resident in the village has offered to pay for remove the Underriver noticeboard and renovate it and the council unanimously approved this. The Parish Council are very grateful for the generosity.

6.8 ROSPA

The Parish Council considered the reports, and the clerk will get quotes on the work recommended.

ACTION: Clerk

6.9 Donations

Mr Bourne proposed to donate £250 towards Victim Support this was seconded by Mr Bulleid and agreed unanimously.

6.10 Seal Pavilion

Mrs Stiasny has received one quote and has two other companies who are coming to quote and therefore will defer to the next meeting.

ACTION: RS

6.11 Wildflowers

This item was discussed under KCC Matters for Childsbridge Lane it was mentioned that the pathways should have some edging so that it doesn't narrow the pathways. The renewal of Childsbridge Lane licence is required Mr Boorman will complete the paperwork.

ACTION: OB

6.12 Reserves/Deposits Funds

Mr Michaelides discussed the options for reserves and deposit funds and that he had spoken to other clerks and CCLA was the best option for Public Sector deposit funds. Mrs Stiasny proposed that we approve Mr Michaelides and the clerk to apply for an account and this was seconded by Mr Penn and agreed unanimously.

Mr Michaelides suggested we look at online payments moving forward which would require dual control, where a councillor releases the payments. The clerk will contact NatWest to understand how this will work with our Standing Orders

ACTION: - Mr Michaelides/clerk

6.13 Facilities and Recreation Ground

Mr Bourne proposed the Health and Safety Risk Assessment along with the Pavilion Booking form and this was seconded by Mr Michaelides and agreed unanimously.

7 Action Plan

The Action Plan of items outstanding for completion from previous meetings was discussed and will be updated to be in date order.

8 Accounts and cheques

Mr Michaelides proposed the cheques and direct debits, and this was seconded by Mrs Stiasny and agreed unanimously.

Cheques signed September 2023

Cheque No	Payee	Amount	VAT Reclaim	Description
006516	CSG Global Education Limited	£289.52	£48.25	Cleaning Materials
006517	T D Geer Limited	£523.50	£87.25	Plumbing and Servicing Boilers
006518	The Open Spaces Society	£45.00		Subscriptions
006519	Playsafety Limited	£205.20	£34.20	Annual inspections
006520	Jane Haselden	£472.50		o/s Website Maintenance for Jan, Feb, March 2022, Annual Hosting renewal, website maintenance April, May, June 2023 and Annual Domain Name renewal
006521	The Community Heartbeat Trust	£68.34	£11.39	Defibrillator pads
006522	MDH Horticultural Contractors	£4,722.30	£787.05	Parish mowing and hedge cutting
006523	Kent Association of Local Councils	£84.00	£14.00	Training Course
006524	Sevenoaks Gutters Limited	£102.00	£17.00	Guttering
006525	Flare Electrical	£395.41	£65.90	PAT testing and ECIR
006526	K C Davies Limited	£30.00		Window Cleaning
006527	R Crouch	£160.00		Strimming
006528	Sevenoaks District Council	£65.60		Refuse collection
006529	Kent County Council			Pension Fund
006530	Mrs C Ward			Caretaker Salary
006531	Inland Revenue			Deductions
006532	Mrs C Boland			Clerks Salary
006533	Mrs C Boland	£122.00	£20.34	Broadband and Training course

Direct Debits Received to date

Payment Date	Payee	Amount	VAT Reclaim	Description
24/8/2023	Npower	£168.76	£8.04	Streetlighting
20/8/2023	BT	£661.27	£110.21	BT

20/8/2023	British Gas	£221.58	£10.55	Seal Pavilion Electricity
29/7/2023	SEFE Energy	£111.47	£5.31	Seal Pavilion Gas
25/8/2023	SEFE Energy	£112.58	£5.36	Seal Pavilion Gas
20/9/2023	British Gas	£173.62	£8.27	Seal Pavilion Electricity
26/9/2023	Npower	£167.22	£7.96	Streetlighting
20/9/2023	Castle Water	£20.87	£3.48	Water rates

9 Items for Information only

9.1 Seal Recreation Ground

KCC have conveyed their thanks to the Parish Council for accepting to terminate the Licence for the walking bus with effect from the end of the academic year. The school is still scheduled to convert to an Academy on 1st September 2023.

9.2 Sevenoaks Football Club

We have been informed that the grant has been accepted for the grass maintenance fund which will provide a fund of £33,280 spread over 6 years. The grant provides with the following funding Y1 £8320, Y2 £8320, Y3 £5548, Y4 £5548, Y5 £2772, Y6 £2772.

The Chairman would like to express to Mr Spencer his thanks for all the work and assistance he has given to the Parish Council in finalising the agreement with the football club; especially as he is no longer a councillor.

9.3 AGAR 2022/23

The Notice of Conclusion of audit Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2023 has been announced 8th September 2023.

10 Planning

The Council received and noted the minutes of the planning committee on 13th July, 24 July and 21st August and the responses to planning consultations submitted after those meetings which have been circulated.

The Next Parish Council meeting will be 12th October at Seal Pavilion at 7.30pm.

Consultations:

- KCC launched the [Kent Community Warden Service Review | Let's talk Kent](#) on 12th July as there is a £1 million reduction in budget to the service. The deadline for responses is 3rd October 2023.
- [National Highways and Transport Survey 2023-24 | Let's talk Kent](#). There are 6 surveys covering: accessibility, highways maintenance, public transport, road safety, tackling congestion and walking and cycling. The deadline for responses is 29th February 2024.

Matters for Information Only

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

<https://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.

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/environment-waste-and-planning/public-rights-of-way/report-a-problem-on-a-right-of-way>

Please report street light outages in Seal (other than on the A25) to the Parish Council.

Meeting closed 9.45pm