WROTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING,
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 7th August 2024
In the Wrotham Pavilion TN15 7AH

Present: P Gillin (Chairman), H Rayner, C Mills, D Beach, S Vick, T Jacob & K Denton

In Attendance: Lesley Cox (Clerk)

1. **Apologies for absence:**

   Cllr's Coffin & Betts (T&MBC Commitments)

2. **Attendance Register**

   The attendance register was signed, and declarations of interest duly noted.

   All Meetings

   Cllr's Gillin, Rayner, Betts, Beach & Denton members of Keep Borough's Green
   Cllr Beach member of the St George's Bell Ringers
   Cllr Gillin member of Wrotham Xmas Lights
   Cllr's Rayner & Gillin members of Friends of St George's
   Cllr Rayner member of St George's Church of England Wrotham
   Cllr Rayner retired member of the Baltic Exchange Ltd
   Cllr Rayner life member of the National Trust
   Cllr's Rayner & Beach members of Kent Association of Change Ringers
   Cllr Rayner assistant Village Magazine Deliverer
   Cllr Rayner life member of the Royal National Lifeboat Institute
   Cllr Vick member of Wrotham Fireworks
   Cllr's Rayner, Gillin, Beach & Denton members of the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England – WPC corporate member
   Cllr Gillin committee member of Tonbridge & Malling branch of the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England.
   Cllr Coffin firework provider for Wrotham
   Cllr Mills committee member of Wrotham Music Festival
   Cllr Mills director of charity, Good Food Matters.
   Cllr Rayner Conservative Party Member
   Cllr Rayner Member of Tonbridge & Malling Conservative Party Executive & Management Committees
   Provider of Electrical Services to Wrotham Parish Council – all meetings Cllr S Vick

3. **Minutes**

   The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd July 2024were proposed by Cllr Rayner seconded by Cllr Mills, agreed and signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

4. **Reports if any from PCSO**

   No report received

5. **Public Question Time**

   No public in attendance

6. **Consideration of the use of Private Security Contractors to obtain evidence of illegal and anti-social activities within Wrotham**

   The cost to Wrotham Parish Council of the incidents of anti-social behaviour is escalating exponentially with seemingly no support from other authorities. The latest damage to the CPA will cost in the region of £2,000 to repair and 5 weeks down the line we are still awaiting a meaningful response from the police to our submitted CCTV evidence. The proposal from Cllr Jacob seconded by Cllr Gillin to allocate £10K to commission the services of Private Security Contractors was agreed. Cllr Rayner abstained from voting.

7. Recreation Ground Charity Registration Number 302896 – Closure

Background
The charity was registered in February 1963 and the governing document is a deed dated 17th March 1882.
2 Trustees Harry Rayner & WPC Clerk.
The charity doesn't own the Recreation Ground as the title deed is in the name of Wrotham Parish Council and generates no income.

The proposal from Cllr Vick, seconded by Cllr Mills to agree to receive from the charity any interest it may hold in the Recreation Ground and accept full responsibility for the area was agreed unanimously.
As named trustees Cllr Rayner and Lesley Cox as Clerk to Wrotham Parish Council formally agreed to apply for the closure of the Charity Registration Number 302896

8. October Meeting Date – Proposed change due to Clerk/Chairman's holiday commitments

The 16th October 2024 was proposed as the date for the October meeting of Wrotham Parish Council, to be confirmed at the September meeting.

9. Reports if any from County Cllr and or Borough Cllr

Council Councillor – Harry Rayner

The new government has put significant development pressure on the greenbelt. T&MBC has redrawn its current Local Plan proposal at the Regulation 18B Stage. Under the new government NPPF proposals starting a new Local Plan will require T&MBC to increase their housing allocation numbers by around 25%.
In Cllr Rayner's opinion these numbers are unachievable due to the lack of capacity within the utility infrastructure in Kent. No new reservoirs have been built for 50 years, and although local water is supplied from underground aquifers, insufficient treated fresh water can be pumped at peak times to meet demand during hot weather. The ancient local sewage system infrastructure is collapsing with frequent incidents of failure and flooding within Borough Green. UK Power Networks Ltd raised concerns at their ability to supply power to the number of new houses proposed even before the 25% increase in requirement.
The EU Entry Exit System (EES) has been delayed until November 2024. KCC feel the issues of traffic congestion within Kent that the new system will cause are not being addressed and that the Councils concerns are not being recognises as Central Government see this as a local issue. KCC are pressing the Government to liaise and consider solutions outside of Kent.
Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children numbers remaining in Kent continue to rise, KCC are pressing the Home Office to set up a formal structure to facilitate the transfer to other counties.
Both Adult and Child Social Services are experiencing a 10-15% increase in numbers requiring higher levels of support. Along with an increase expenditure on Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) children, with Council Tax increases capped at 5% KCC are facing a budget deficit of £82M in 2025-26.
A KCC – Medway Combined Authority discussion is still ongoing. Medway is not interested in the Mayoral Structure System imposed by the previous Conservative Government and as a Labour Council may have more weight on this matter with the new Labour administration.
Funds KCC received under the Department of Transport Bus Improvement Plan cease at the end of March 2025. No replacement scheme has been announced to date. The £2 cap on bus fares has resulted in a 12.5 – 15 per cent increase in bus usage but numbers are still not up to pre COVID levels with revenue down 35 per cent.
KCC are pressing government on the issue of multi-year financial arrangements for Tier 1 government bodies, as planning finances on a 1-year basis is not efficient within large authorities.

10. Reports from various Committees

Grounds

Post meeting note – Peter Barden one of our regular contractors will be unavailable to work for a least 6 weeks following a knee operation.

Buildings

The application for a West Kent Rural Grant for PV on the pavilion has been submitted

Highways

L&K Ltd has the following items to complete on the LED streetlight project. The removal of the column 22 at the Lychgate. Installation of the final lantern in Kemsing Road and all outstanding painting work. UK Power Networks has the removal of 3 redundant poles to complete their works.
Cllr's Beach & Gillin had a walk around the village with Les Henry on the 18th July 2024 and we await his feasibility study on speed limit reductions through the village.
The speed radar equipment has been installed on Old London Road and will be programmed to count numbers and frequency of vehicles exceeding the speed limit. Our thanks to SV Electrical for undertaking the installation free of charge.
The purchase offer from WPC to KCC of West Street Car Park has been acknowledged and passed to their dispersal team.

Crime & Disorder

No Report

Finance

No Report

Planning

The minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on the 24th July 2024 were proposed by Cllr Rayner, seconded by Cllr Beach, agreed, and signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

The proposal from Cllr Gillin, seconded by Cllr Beach following the information received in respect of the original planning application to commission a report from Les Henry on the parking situation around Tower View was agreed unanimously.

Skate Park

No Report

Website

No Report

Climate Change Strategy

No Report

Youth

No Report

KALC

No Report

PPP

No Report

CPRE

No Report

11. Correspondence Received

Mazars	Audited AGAR 2023-24 Previously emailed	No Matters Raised. Requirement for .gov.uk domain to be an agenda item for September 2024
KALC	Post Election Planning Briefing 21st August 2024 at 1.00pm. Free event lasting ½ hour Previously emailed	Registration via website, contact Clerk for login
NALC	Chief Executive's Bulletin: Proposed reforms and changes to the planning system. Eight-week consultation on the NPPF https://www.nalc.gov.uk/news/entry/2977-nalc-seeks-views-on-government%E2%80%99s-nppf-consultation Previously emailed.	Public Consultation deadline 9th September 2024 Added to the website Cllr Gillin to respond on behalf of the Parish Alliance
KCC	Local Transport Plan https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/local-transport-plan-5-2024 Previously emailed	Public Consultation deadline 8th October 2024 Added to the website
T&MBC	Home Upgrade Grant https://www.eonenergy.com/hug.html Previously emailed	For Information Added to the website
KCC Harry Rayner	Home Start Programme – Supports families who have children under 5 years within the Tonbridge and Malling Area https://www.home-start.org.uk/home-start-north-west-kent	For Information Added to the website
Kent County Playing Fields Association	AGM 21st August 2024 at 12.30pm The Dog and Bear Public House Lenham Previously emailed	For Information
SLCC	The Clerk July 2024	For Information
Clerks & Councils Direct	July 2024 Issue 154	For Information

12. Financial Matters

i. Cheques for approval and signature

It was proposed by Cllr Mills, seconded by Cllr Beach and resolved that the following accounts be passed for payment:

Payable To	Invoice Details	Amount	Cheque No
Suffolk Life Annuities Ltd	Storage Depot Monthly Rental	£400.00	BAC 09/07/24
B Devenish	Pavilion Security Deposit Refund	£50.00	BAC 09/07/24
L Grundy	Allotment Security Deposit Refund	£50.00	BAC 10/07/24
Npower	Public Toilets – Electricity	£45.57	BAC 17/07/24
N Holmes	Pavilion Security Deposit Refund	£100.00	BAC 22/07/24
Flagstone Paving *	Sand & Cement	£14.10	BAC 22/07/24
C S Mitchell Ltd *	Old London Road – Speed Monitor Devise Pole – Supply & Install	£576.60	BAC 22/07/24
S Tunio	Pavilion Security Deposit Refund	£50.00	BAC 22/07/24
Kevin Holt	Ground Maintenance Works July 2024	£1,220.00	BAC 29/07/24
Peter Barden	Litter Pick Open Spaces Maintenance – CPA	187.50 360.00	BAC 31/07/24

	Inspection – Multi-Court Repair – Cricket Ground Hedge – Shrub Pruning – Rubbish Burning – General Clearance Burial Ground Maintenance– Grave Strimming – Tree Works - General Clearance Skatepark Maintenance *** Total	 217.50 30.00 £795.00	
PlaySafety Ltd *	Rospa Inspections including skatepark – BGPC & Platt PC to contribute.	£268.80	S O 07/08/24
Lesley Cox	Salary July 2024 deductions include pension contribution.. Telephone Quarterly Office Allowance Total	2,549.49 20.00 150.00 £2,719.49	BAC
HM Revenue & Custom	PAYE / NI July 2024.	£969.82	BAC
KCC Pension Fund	Pension Contribution July 2024.	£1,266.51	BAC
Borough Green PC **	Skate Park Litter Pick / Checks July 2024	£155.00	BAC
Astra Security Systems *	1 GB Monthly Data per Router	£60.00	BAC
Capel Groundcare Ltd*	Ground Maintenance Contract 1 – July 2024 Cuts	£486.40	BAC
NKCS*	Contract Cleaning June 2024 St George's Hall to contribute	£700.33	BAC
Assured Water Hygiene *	Pavilion Salt x7 Delivered 2/08/24	£113.05	BAC
Viking *	Hand Wash / Toilet Rolls	£87.53	BAC
Highscore *	Website Hosting	£336.00	BAC
Lighting Efficiency Design *	Streetlighting – Product specification and dangerous DNO negotiations	£600.00	BAC
Metro Bank Account Transfer	Open Spaces Materials * Glyphosate Commercial Strength * Laptop Charger * Fasthosts * - Generic Emails Monthly Account Fees Monthly Transfer Total	65.95 43.93 17.87 12.00 7.20 £146.95	BAC

* denotes items including VAT
** denotes 22.3% to be reimbursed
*** denotes 73.3% to be reimbursed

Payments made by Direct Debit / Standing Order Since Previous Meeting 3rd July 2024

Water Plus	Pavilion Metered Water	£46.93	17/07/24
Water Plus	Allotment Metered Water	£7.81	
Water Plus	Burial Ground Metered Water	£4.81	
T&MBC	Burial Ground Rates	£56.00	22/07/24
BT Group	Parish Email	£7.50	
EDF	Multi-Court Electricity	£25.11	23/07/24
SSE Energy	Street Lighting Supply	£519.21	29/07/24
T&MBC	West Street Car Park Rates	£140.00	01/08/24

ii. Bank Reconciliation for sign off

The following account balances were checked, agreed and signed by Cllr Denton

BANK ACCOUNT BALANCES as at 5th July 2024

ACCOUNT	BALANCE
Current	£50.00
Business Reserve	£4,482.73
Business Savings	£41,444.87
Community Skate Park	£1.03
CCLA FOW Fund	£31,572.61
CCLA Parish Fund	£43,652.82
CCLA Community Fund	£78,655.50
Metro Account	£866.60
TOTAL	**£200,726.16**

13. Date of next Parish Council Meeting

The date for the next meeting was proposed for the 4th September 2024 to be held in the Wrotham Pavilion at 7.30pm, with the date for the interim planning meeting to be advised.

14. Planning Committee to Consider

1. Applications received

Application Number	Address	Details	Parish Council Recommendation
24/01146/PA	The Bull Hotel Bull Lane	Retrospective application: Replacement and installation of new steps, ramp, walls and paving	Wrotham Parish Council is in favour of this access improvement in principle but considers the use of modern engineering bricks to be ill-considered and discordant. Given the listed walls are of ragstone and this reflects the local quarrying of ragstone for centuries past, then it should be possible to add a ragstone facing to the front of the new walls. Ragstone is still locally quarried in Oaken Wood,
24/01147/PA		LBA: As Above	

			Hermitage Quarry and can be supplied in any size, to fit the needs of the application. WPC request that the opinion of the Heritage Officer should be taken into consideration.

i. Notifications of Decisions

Application Number	Address	Details	Decision

2. Correspondence Received

T&MBC Planning Applications Lists

Planning Appeal – Permission refused
T&MBC Reference 23/02001/FL Park Head Cottage Wrotham Hill Road
Demolition of existing single bay brick, flat roofed garage and replacement with two bay timber framed pitched roof garage.

Planning Inspectorate's Reference APP/H2265/D/24/3346368 Start Date 30-Jul-24

For Information as the appeal if proceeding under the Householder Appeals Service, there is no opportunity for further comments

The meeting closed at 8.40pm

…….Chairman

……..Date