

**MINUTES OF WOULDHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**  
**TUESDAY 7<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER, 2023 AT 7.30PM**  
**WOULDHAM VILLAGE HALL**

Present: Cllr Bell, Cllr Marr, Cllr Yard, Cllr Gray. Cllr Hopper, Cllr Miles, Cllr Britchfield, Cllr Parris  
 BCllr Davis, BCllr Dalton, T Miles (Clerk)     6 Members of Public

1.	<b>APOLOGIES: NONE</b>	ACTION
2.	<b>MINUTES</b> The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 3 <sup>rd</sup> October, 2023 were proposed by Cllr Yard and seconded by Cllr Marr. The minutes were to be signed by the Chairman	
3.	<b>MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES</b> Members agreed that any other matters arising from the minutes would be dealt with under the appropriate heading, as the meeting progressed through the agenda.	
4.	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - None</b>	
5.	<b>EXTERNAL REPORTS</b>	
5.1	Borough Council: Report attached. BCllr Davis advised that there had been some confusion with the new Agile system. He confirmed that councils can respond to any application, but now, applications where the council is a statutory consultee, a letter will be sent with the details and there are 21 days from the date received to respond. Clerk asked if Wouldham are the consultee or TMBC with the Ringshill farm application. BCllr Davis was unsure, but it should be on the letter. Clerk will check and confirm. Cllr Parris asked which BCllrs represent Wouldham. BCllr Dalton confirmed that all three represent all areas. Unfortunately, BCllr McDermott's father is unwell, so workload is being shared among the BCllr Davis and himself. Cllr Parris noted it would be nice to see him at some point. Cllr Gray asked if there was any update on the pizza application. BCllr Davis noted that it is currently with enforcement, but it is a very difficult issue due to the quality of evidence needed to take to court.	Clerk
5.2	Community Warden: Clerk advised that she had received an email from the KCC Warden. He is currently working with 3 families, supporting the East Malling Food Bank and continues to build relationships in the area.	
5.3	School Governor: Cllr Bell advised that he has spoken Adam Baker, (Governor Rep for the Council). Mr Baker reported that there had only been one meeting this year and the parking situation had been discussed. Minutes seem to be unavailable. Cllr Bell will try to find out if a copy can be made public. Cllr Gray asked if the Governor Rep should be a parish councillor. Cllr Bell noted that it had been agreed Mr Baker would remain as our governor rep. BCllr Dalton noted that BCllr McDermott had contacted the school regarding the parking issues, but has yet to receive a response.	
6.	<b>Community Safety</b>	
6.1	<b>Police:</b> Not received	
6.2	<b>Speedwatch:</b> Cllr Britchfield noted that there had been no sessions this month	
6.3	<b>Neighbourhood Watch:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> of October between 21:30 and 22:00 in High Street. Somebody stole a laptop accidentally left behind on a bench.</li> <li>• On Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> of October between 06:00 and 09:00 in Batchelor Drive. A man threw stones at the windows of a residential property but there was no damage</li> </ul>	

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

<b>7.</b>	<b>Administrative and Finance</b>	
7.1	Authorisation of payment request. Cllrs Marr, Hopper and Bell signed the request.	
7.2	Precept Projects: Cllr Bell asked if any Councillors had prepared a project to be included in next year's budget. Cllr Yard advised that she is investigating having free trial for cameras for a month and presented information on the type of camera, which will be able to be re-located as needed. The cost will be between 8-10k. Cllr Britchfield asked how it would be monitored. Cllr Yard advised that it would be run by Cloud and all the information can go straight to KCC/Police to issue fines. Cllr Britchfield suggested that it may be worth liaising with the Police/KCC to ensure they have the capacity to prosecute. Cllr Gray noted that the trial may continue which would delay installation. BCllr Dalton noted that the Police Inspector will be attending the PPP meeting on 9/11, therefore the question could be put to him then. Cllr Bell will raise the question at the meeting.	EB
7.3	Cllr Bell explained that the Finance & Admin (FA) team need to meet in advance of the December meeting to finalise budgets for next year and members will give available dates to the Clerk to arrange.	
7.4	Cllr Bell advised that auditor has again recommended the implication of Scribe software due to income and welcomed discussion on how to proceed. He noted that the due to the current major projects, it may only be needed for the 3 years of the projects. He also advised that when the previous FA team researched it, costs came out at around £1200 for the first year then a subscription of £660 per year. Cllr Miles felt that if the software is needed for the Clerk to do her job, it should be acquired. Cllr Britchfield noted that the costs seemed similar to other software subscriptions. It was agreed that the FA team would investigate further to look at the system to see if it would help.	F&A Team
7.5	Annual investment strategy. Cllrs reviewed and agreed the Investment Strategy. Cllr Marr asked for confirmation of its purpose. Clerk explained that it was a requirement for Councils with over 100k cash and this was one of the reasons a new savings account was started to hold reserves.	
	<b>Members of the Public</b>	
8.1	<b>MOP1.</b> Noted that poppies have been put up in Peters Village, but they look a bit sparse and wondered if the Council could get some more to at least double the amount around the parish. Also, she noted that the litter picking route was given before new houses were built, therefore only part of Worrall Drive is being done. Cllr Gray felt that it was included in the management fee. Cllr Miles advised that it is the responsibility of the contractor to ensure the area is tidy until they leave site.	
8.2	<b>MOP2</b> .Advised that she had stopped putting dog poo bags around Peters Village a few months again and is now going to give up Wouldham village too, there are 17 bottles around the village. MOP offered to look after the one by the river. MOP2 also advised that when Speedwatch numbers are recorded, they also go to the DVLA. For information, in September, 2.5% of drivers going through a Speedwatch area have been issued with other offences.	
8.3	<b>MOP 3</b> Asked if any progress had been made in relation to the situation outside the school. Clerk explained that an update will be covered under a further agenda item. MOP 3 also advised that the school bus for children who go to Rochester schools does not cover all the schools. The Parish Council were unaware of this and the Clerk will check to see why it has changed. He also felt that 3 salt bins may be inadequate for the estate. Clerk explained that these were for danger areas determined by residents as KCC felt that the area is too flat to warrant salt bins. The bins in the old village are placed at strategic points where there is a significant incline i.e. top and bottom of School Lane and Knowle Road. Cllr Parris noted that there is now a slope to the new houses. Cllr Gray advised that KCC will not salt unadopted roads. Clerk to find out where the gritter lorries go.	Clerk  Clerk
8.4	<b>MOP3</b> Thanked the Parish Council for the donation of the wreath for the Rainbows and Brownies unit.	
9	<b>Planning</b>	
9.1	<b>Planning applications considered and commented upon by the Planning</b> <b>23/01854/AT</b> Unit 3 Tolhurst Close - Retrospective application for signage to front of shop <b>NO DECISION AS AT 30/10/23</b>	

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

9.2	<p><b>Planning Consent Issued:</b> Approved NONE</p>	
9.3	<p><b>Planning applications refused/withdrawn:</b> <b>23/01847/NMA</b> Village Centre Parcel - Non-Material Amendment to planning permission TM/19/01949/FL to allow amendments to the entrance, landscaping, eaves and ridge height increase, changes to materials and design, relocation of bin and cycles stores, and amendments to the parking layout – <b>REFUSED</b></p> <p>Cllr Bell noted that further to receiving a consultation request for storage containers at Ringshill Farm, the Parish Council have not been included as a consultee on any of the main issues i.e the change of entrance, which now means that heavy vehicles are now banned from coming from Borstal due to sign placement. There was also no consultation regarding change of use from farming to commercial. This means that there are now many more vehicles coming through the village (it has been reported that, early mornings, many of these work vehicles come through the No Entry).</p>	
10	<p><b>Roads, Footpaths &amp; Lighting (RFL)</b></p> <p><b>10.1 Highways Improvement Plan (HIP):</b> Cllr Hopper reported that at the review meeting, it was disappointing (but unsurprising) that there is not sufficient funding to do many of the priorities listed in the plan or there were other issues which would make them difficult to implement. The plan, with KCC responses, will be added to the website. However, some of the smaller actions will be taken forward. Cllrs were also disappointed that the KCC design statement stated that the signage already available doesn't comply as it is not straight edged, but it is hoped the 'Welcome to Wouldham' signs will be able to be erected soon, particularly on New Court Road as you come into Peters Village. Cllr Parris noted that the signs were purchased many years ago, but there was some difficulty getting them sited in the right place due to the boundary with Burham. Cllr Hopper noted that in East Sussex, there is signage for speed check areas and could we look at getting some. Clerk to check. BCllr Dalton suggested that the issue could be raised with the police inspector at the PPP meeting on Thursday.</p> <p><b>10.2 RFL:</b> Cllr Gray reported that she has chased the white and yellow lines on the High Street again and cutting at the top of School Lane. The top of Knowle also needs cutting back at the gates. Both sides of Pilgrims Way also need cutting again by about a foot to help sight lines.</p> <p><b>10.3</b> Cllr Bell reported that he had visited the Head to discuss parking. There is now an increase in staff using the carpark, therefore, no spaces for parents. The Head confirmed that the morning drop-off loops are open, but they won't open in the afternoon as parents have been too aggressive and it was just used for parking. Cllr Bell has also spoken to KCC about a Crossing Patrol Warden, they will come out to do a survey, but advised that the critical flow of traffic needed, would not cover Worrall Drive, it may be better on Village Road. Also, there is already difficulty in appointing Crossing Wardens, so this could be an issue. Cllr Bell noted that the school had received a form from KCC to start the process, but it had not been completed, they will complete and return. MOP thought that dropped curbs meant that drivers should stop. Cllr Gray advised that it is only mandatory where there is crossing/zebra crossing signage. MOP noted that is frustrating when drivers park across dropped curbs.</p> <p>The Head did not know about the travel plan and has promised to follow this up. However, she is looking at cutting down the catchment of the area and looking at more integration between communities. Cllr Gray asked about double yellows. Cllr Hopper advised that it would be unlikely that they would be approved as there is no alternative parking therefore the traffic would just move to another site. Cllr Bell noted that whilst we want to help resolve the problems, we have no powers. Cllr Miles suggested the school could go back to doing staggered drop off times. Cllr Gray said that this would get thrown out as it would cost the school extra money to implement due to having to change break times etc.</p>	Clerk EB
11.	<p><b>Open Spaces (OS)</b></p> <p><b>11.1</b> Cllr Yard reported that the parish seems to be ok at the moment. The 2 pallets and fly-tipping in the Rec have now been removed and the 'dog poo' situation is not so bad. Cllr Parris agreed that the footpaths seemed better, but still a few issues around the outside of the Rec. Cllr Yard felt this could be a result of dogs being off their leads at night.</p> <p><b>11.2</b> Cllr Parris reported that the litter bins along the river were not emptied last week. Cllr Yard will check and report.</p>	TY

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

11.3	Cllr Hopper asked if the trees alongside the Rec on Knowle Road could be added to the grounds maintenance contract. Agreed. Clerk to notify contractor.	
11.4	Cllr Bell presented information of the metal bench as requested. He advised that 4 can be purchased for £3014.00 (without installation) but previous approval was for 5k, so proposed to go ahead with this design. Seconded by Cllr Gray. Agreed	Clerk/ EB
11.5	<b>Allotments:</b> Cllr Bell reported that the Site manager of the Association had resigned. However, we do not know the details or if the position is being filled by anyone else.	
11.6	<b>Common/footpaths:</b> nothing to report	
12.	<b>Village Hall</b>	
12.1	Update on current situation Cllr Bell reported that an EGM had been held to discuss the future of the Village Hall Charity. As no Trustees came forward, they have agreed to dissolved the Charity and pass back to the Parish Council. Clerk will support Trustees with the Charity Commission to wind up the Charity in line with their constitution. Clerk noted that the new sign has been put up and that 20 of the chairs had been ordered as there was no benefit if purchasing all 40 at once. It was agreed that they were acceptable and to purchase the remainder. Clerk also reported that the new Parent and Toddler group is very successful.	Clerk
13.	<b>Health &amp; Safety/Risk Management</b>	
13.1	<b>Defibrillators:</b> Community Centre and Village Hall units are ready for use and the inspection form was passed to Clerk for filing.  Cllr Bell reported that there had been no response from the church. And, after several attempts to get approval from Shepherd and Neame he had contacted them by phone and was told that it needed surveyor approval, which they are arranging. Cllr Parris suggested that there may be a local electrical who could volunteer to instal it and will progress it once approval has been received.	DP
13.2	<b>Lifebuoy:</b> .Cllr Miles reported that she had checked the lifebuoy – no issues although one of the anti-tamper tags had been triggered.	
13.3	<b>Village Hall</b> – Clerk advised that vermin control had reported that there is now only minimal activity and would shortly be looking at sealing all remaining gaps. The electrical certificate has been arranged by the Trustee although many on the local gas safety engineers do not do commercial premises. Clerk asked if the Council would like to include annual boiler servicing which will make it easier to arrange? Agreed. Clerk to arrange annual contract for certificate and servicing.	
13.4	<b>Risk assessments:</b> None	
14.	<b>General Village Business</b>	
14.1	Items for the Community Magazine: Please let Clerk know with any items for inclusion. Oct/Nov is available on <a href="https://wouldhampc.com/media/Community-Magazine/2023/oct.nov%2023%20web.pdf">https://wouldhampc.com/media/Community-Magazine/2023/oct.nov%2023%20web.pdf</a>	ALL
14.2	Questions for PPP meeting. Cllr Bell will attend.	EB
14.3	Project updates: Cllr Bell noted that the updates on projects had been received by councillors and there were a few points that needed formally agreeing, although these had already been approved via emails. Therefore, he proposed all the following:  Resolution: To pay 50k to KCC. Seconded by Cllr Yard. All Agreed Resolution: Sign lease and SLA for minibus. Seconded by Cllr Britchfield. All agreed Resolution: To sign SLA for Youth & Community Worker. Seconded by Cllr Yard. All agreed	
15.	<b>Correspondence:</b> None	
16.	<b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b> 5 <sup>th</sup> December, 2023 at 7.30 – Venue: Village Hall	
17.	<b>QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS, CHAIRPERSON AND CLERK:</b> To be passed to Clerk 7 days before the next meeting	
18.	<b>Meeting Closed: 9.20</b>	

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Finances up to October 2022</b>			Nov Meeting	
Opening Balance Nat West 11/9				£104,005.13
<b>RINGFENCED TOTALS</b>				
Monies from car park donations			£	403.00
Monies from membership grant			£	1,700.00
Monies from Big Lottery			£	93.99
KCC Community Transport Grant			£	30,000.00
<b>Current available monies ringfenced</b>			<b>£</b>	<b>32,196.99</b>
<b>Receipts made up to 16/10</b>				
17-Oct-23	GOOD COD	F&C van		£60.00
18-Oct-23	GOOD COD	F&C van		£60.00
18-Oct-23	GOOD COD	F&C van		£45.00
10-Oct-23	JR AUCTIONEERS LTD	Donation to magazine		£30.00
				<b>£ 195.00</b>
<b>Payments made up to 17/10</b>				
	Staffing Costs			1513.71
	PAYE		BAC	265.35
	Office		BAC	216.66
	Giffgaff	Sep mobile	DD	6
	Gmail (est)		DD	5.52
	EDF		DD	18
	N Power	Streetlights	DD	33.21
	Barming Pest Control	VH rat problem	BAC	180.00
	T Miles	Expenses	BAC	129.74
	Nest	Pension	DD	42.28
25-Oct	Npower	Streetlights	DD	48.48
	Strictly Tables	Chairs (min 12.3 Oc	BAC	664.8
	Giffgaff	Oct Mobile	DD	6
	St Jame	Allotment rent		330
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>				<b>£ 3,459.75</b>
	P & L for period		-£	3,264.75
	Balance (inc ringfenced)		<b>£</b>	<b>68,543.39</b>
	Pending			
	Closing Bank Balance @ 27/10			<b>£ 100,740.38</b>
<b>Payments to be agreed at Nov meeting</b>				
	Mazars	External Audit		426.00
	Staffing Costs			1513.51
	Nest	Pension		42.28
	Office			216.66
	Hadlum Printing	Newsletter		65.00
	Compaid	Minibus SLA		29,500.00
	Spy Alarms	CCTV maint		123.6
	Raydor Signs	VH Sign		72
	Thompson Elphick	Payroll		90
	EDF	CCTV		18
	T Miles	Expenses		103.92
	Google	Gmail		5.52
	Giffgaff	Mobile		6
<b>TOTAL COMMITTED SPEND @</b>				<b>£ 32,182.49</b>
<b>ESTIMATED BALANCES</b>				
Estimated Bank total			<b>£</b>	<b>68,557.89</b>
<b>RINGFENCED TOTALS</b>			<b>£</b>	<b>32,196.99</b>
<b>TOTAL AVAILABLE</b>			<b>£</b>	<b>36,360.90</b>

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_